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OPERA IN VENICE IN THE XVIIth CENTURY¹

By HENRY PRUNIERES

THE traveller of 1630, having traversed the lagoon, seen the red Campanile rise before him, and landed at the Piazzetta, has many surprises in store for him. The strangeness of this city where the streets are canals and the carriages boats, the activity of the harbor where Turk and slave and Moor discharge the products of oriental industry, the quais of the Merceria where merchants gather and the curious come from all countries of the world, and finally the Piazzetta where, of a morning, amid the medley of costumes most brilliant and bizarre, a false note of austerity is struck by the long black cloaks under which the Venetian nobility suffocate in summer—all this offers to the eyes a spectacle at the sumptuous diversity of which foreigners do not cease to wonder.

The manners and customs of the Republic excite no less surprise. The extreme liberty enjoyed by artisans and bourgeois contrasts with the strict rules with which the nobility has hedged itself about. Nothing could be more frank, nothing more bold, than a man of the people; nothing more reserved than a noble: he knows that the spies of the Ten are constantly watching him; he will not dare speak to this foreign gentleman who seeks to approach him, before making sure that he does not belong to some embassy—such imprudence might cost him his life. Certain patricians, nevertheless, assured of powerful support in the bosom of the Grand Council, openly defy the laws and commit countless

¹The following pages are taken from a chapter in the author's *Francesco Cavalli et l'Opéra Vénitien*, about to be published by Rieder, in which the subject is treated at greater length.

excesses. Banished from Venice, they still dare live there. Their palaces are veritable fortresses. They go out in their gondolas escorted by boats filled with soldiers and *bravi* armed to the teeth. It is not good to be among their enemies: whoever is, must be upon his guard if he would not find himself slipping into a canal some night with a dagger in his back.

The morals of Venice are the loosest in all Italy—and God knows life is not saintly in Rome, Mantua, Naples! In Venice one must only abstain from speaking ill of the Doge and the Ten: on this condition everything is permissible. Nowhere do women live in less security: they are always being carried off—women of the people, of the bourgeoisie, even patrician ladies and nuns. Yet it is perilous to offend the honor of a Venetian noble and the account is settled sooner or later by poison or the knife, even if the guilty party has sought refuge a hundred leagues from the city. The patricians take their own precautions: they lock up their wives and their daughters as the Moors would do, not permitting them to leave their palaces nor to receive visits save from relatives. Fortunately for the ladies, this seclusion comes to an end every year with the carnival.

In Venice, carnival begins the day after Christmas and ends with Shrovetide. During these weeks utter licence reigns. Discomfited husbands grumble but cannot set themselves against custom, the law supreme. Nor do patrician damsels fail to profit by this respite. Night and day they seek diversion in play, in dancing, and in gallant intrigue. Behind a mask anything is permissible, and everyone wears a mask. Only upon repeated commands will priests discard theirs on entering their churches, will choristers lay them aside before intoning praises to the Lord. Also the people must be forbidden to bear arms; for, in these days of carnival, vengeance is easily come by, and it is hard to discover in a masked crowd the hand that struck the blow.

There is no place more brilliant than a convent parlor in carnival-time. Day and night the ladies receive visitors. One even sees at the grille nuns "garbed as men; with plumes in their hats, bowing with the best grace." It is true that even at other times the rules in Venetian convents are not at all strict. The nuns of good family get up and go to bed when it suits them and do not feel bound to attend all the services. Their chief distraction is to make music and take lessons from famous masters.

The churches, too, become places of entirely secular reunion where people meet to hear good music. There is no semblance of devotion in these gatherings; the ladies talk in loud voices with

their friends and exchange signs of understanding with their attendant cavaliers.

* *
*

Music was highly esteemed in Venice and held a place of great importance among the pleasures of that voluptuous city. Yet opera, "that spectacle of princes" which aroused such a passion in Rome as well as in Florence, was long unknown there. It sufficed to associate music with private and public celebrations and with all religious ceremonies. The principal interest of musical life in Venice centered in the ducal chapel of San Marco. If in ordinary times the Procuratori and the local Dean saw to it that the music accompanying the services retained an air of pious austerity, it was allowed on holidays to display a thoroughly mundane magnificence.

The maestro di cappella, the famous Claudio Monteverdi of Cremona, excelled in this very matter of passing from the most severe style to a manner full of surprising and touching effects, well adapted to arouse the admiration of minds but little occupied with pious thoughts. On these days of celebration he called not only upon the ordinary singers, most of whom in addition played some instrument, but also upon the band of wind-instrument players. The numbers varied according to the solemnity of the occasion, but there were rarely less than 30 singers and 20 instrumentalists. To these must be added the two permanent organs and the little organ *del terzo grado*, all three of which played important parts in religious ceremonies. The voices, divided into two choirs, each supported by one of the organs and accompanied by trumpets, cornets, bassoons, and sackbuts, answered each other or united in grand ensembles—an arrangement the glorious effects of which Andrea Gabrieli is supposedly the first to have conceived.

The singers of San Marco constituted a company which went about singing, in return for remuneration, now in private houses, now in churches, performing with equal ease and according to demand sacred motets or amorous madrigals. At San Marco they owed obedience to the vice-chapelmaster, but outside they recognized as leader only the one of their own number whom they had freely elected to that position—a privilege the Procuratori granted them.

The same conditions held for the corporation of instrumental players under the protection of San Silvestro. They took orders

from no one once they had passed the chapel doors. They were excessively insolent. They were always quarrelling with the singers, complaining that since certain of them played various instruments they ought to join their company. In vain the singers protested that they played only in church, not at balls or in public places as the fiddlers did; the latter persisted in their contention. They even tried to make the organists pay them tribute. In the end, the Procuratori had to forbid them further to molest the organists and singers, conceding only that these last should not play instruments for hire elsewhere than in church.

But these quarrels did not prevent a marvelous accord among the musicians the moment there was question of performing a motet. The choir of San Marco was justly famous among all the choir-schools of Italy. Only the pontifical choir perhaps surpassed it in beauty of voices, but it had not the wind-instrument players Venice boasted. On great feast days, the musicians followed the procession behind the clergy, surrounded by penitents. Every year they boarded the *Bucentaur* when the Doge, profiting by a calm day, sailed forth upon the Adriatic to cast in his golden ring in token of alliance and marriage with the sea. The air re-echoed with the sound of trumpet and fife, whereupon the voices, accompanied by all the instruments, intoned a motet.

The most illustrious patricians, not content to possess their private orchestras and to furnish themselves with new music by the best composers—Monteverdi, Grandi, Rovetta, Cavalli—gave magnificent fêtes whenever a wedding or a birth provided the excuse. Then were madrigals sung in great number, or some allegorical cantata the subject of which alluded to the event in question. A ball always followed and the band from San Silvestro played all night.

Sometimes guests were even treated to an opera in the manner of Rome and Florence. This happened in 1630, at the marriage of Giustiniana Mocenigo to Lorenzo Giustiniani. On this occasion Monteverdi set to music the libretto of Giulio Strozzi's *Proserpina rapita*, which was performed at the Palazzo Mocenigo with ballets by the choreographer Girolamo Scolari, and the machines of Giuseppe Schioppi. Unfortunately, there remains of this whole sumptuous evening only the libretto that was printed for the occasion.

From this case it is evident that opera was not unknown in Venice, even opera with machines, in the Roman manner; but such performances were rare, and given, furthermore, before a very limited number of invited guests. Thus it was until the day

when a certain nobleman took it into his head to place a theatre at the disposition of a troupe of singers who had come from Rome, and to give public and paid performances of opera.

* * *

On the eve of this fruitful innovation, Monteverdi appeared in Venice as the revered master to whom the Serene Republic had confided the government of her music—Monteverdi, whose glory had spread to all countries.

After his hard years of slavery at Mantua, Monteverdi appreciated the liberties of Venice, although he feared for his two beloved sons the dangers of her dissolute ways. This great artist, who in his madrigals and his operas knew how to portray the sensual passions and delights of love, lived like a saint. He had recently donned monk's garb and gave himself ardently to his devotions. Impatient of all constraint, with a spirit inclined to revolt, he knew the value of the attentions with which the Procuratori surrounded him. If, at the approach of a solemn festival, he lingered too long at some foreign court rehearsing one of his operas, they made it clear how impossible it was for them to do any longer without his precious presence. Were he ill, they inquired after his health with the most affectionate kindness. They were proud to possess the most illustrious musician of all Italy. For his fame had passed all frontiers: the Emperor and Empress honored him with their protection; in Germany, in France, even in the Netherlands musicians studied, marvelling, his daring works.

Monteverdi ruled in all domains: church, theatre, chamber. His masses in contrapuntal style were no less admired of connoisseurs than his motets for soli, choruses, and orchestra, his madrigals no less than his airs for voice alone. On every harpsichord lay a copy of the *Lamento d'Arianna*, which in earlier days in Mantua had drawn tears from thousands of spectators. Whether for ballets or for tournaments, for operas, cantatas, or solemn masses, Monteverdi's compositions were always in demand.

Yet he himself remained apparently insensible of all these honors. What did they matter to him? His sufferings preyed upon him, consumed him to his very soul. In his peaceful dwelling in the Canon's Close he never achieved inward calm. To his last day he remained impetuous. The flame that devoured him communicated to his music such warmth that it is hard to believe it the work of an old man; up to his very death he remained

miraculously young, possessing in his contacts with life the sensibilities of the adolescent.

Despite the infirmities that overwhelmed him he never slackened in his labors, creating ceaselessly and handling the indocile company of singers and musicians with a sage authority. He reformed certain vicious usages, restored old customs, established a library and a repertoire of sacred music. Around him gathered splendid disciples: it is not his smallest merit in the eye of history that he discovered the genius of Grandi, of Rovetta, and, above all, of Francesco Cavalli.

* * *

It was customary for Venetian noblemen to build theatres on lands belonging to them, and here, in time of carnival, comedies and tragedies were presented. The owners drew considerable profit from these enterprises either by leasing the theatres to the acting companies or by turning them over entirely, reserving for themselves the income from boxes rented for the season and leaving the gate-receipts to the actors.

In 1637 a troupe of singers for the first time took possession of one of these theatres, heretofore reserved for comedies and tragedies—the Teatro San Cassiano, then recently reconstructed by the Tron family, to which it had belonged for many years. In this year, by chance, the Serene Republic had no war to finance, prospering happily under the wise administration of the Doge Francesco Erizzo; in short, all the conditions were favorable for the success of an enterprise at first looked upon as hazardous. Opera had come to be considered so much a court spectacle that it was difficult to imagine it would ever be placed within reach of anyone who had in his pocket the four Venetian *lire* entitling him to occupy a seat in the parterre.

In those days opera was not merely a play “recited to music” with accompaniment of numerous instruments: it was just as much a play to be performed with magnificent, constantly changing settings. The shifting of scenes, the flight of divinities in their chariots held the spectator breathless and wondering, for he had believed such glories reserved for popes and kings.

In Rome, about 1630, the *Intermedi*—those great spectacles held in high esteem for princely fêtes in the days of the Renaissance—had finally been fused with Florentine lyric tragedy. The latter had originally managed with very simple settings; like the pastorales, it was most frequently performed against a background

of greenery. But soon it borrowed from the *Intermedi* their astonishing machines and baroque scenery. The Borghese, and later the Barberini, had completed the transformation of lyric tragedy into opera.

The Barberini had erected close to their palace of the Quattro Fontane an immense hall which held four thousand spectators and which Bernini and other theatrical architects had provided with the most complicated machinery. On such a stage nothing was impossible, and the spectacular element lorded it over the music—the machinist, who was often an architect of genius, like Bernini, ranked ahead of the composer—despite the exceptional excellence of the singers and instrumentalists employed by the Barberini. Indeed, opera tended to become a sort of concert given before superb scenery.

Of all these decorations there remain to us only rough sketches and engravings, more or less varied interpretations, which give us an incomplete idea of what must have been gorgeous exhibitions. We should remember that all the art of this time aimed at effect. Those baroque churches with their ceilings of sham skies and the painted perspective of their chapels; those Roman palaces with their open colonnades and amazing caryatids; those gardens with their alleys of fountains and flowerbeds ornamented with statues—are not all these opera settings? The XVIIth Century in Italy was truly the century of decorative scenery, and invention was prodigally lavished upon a style of which we to-day hardly even suspect the grandeur.

It was this highly spectacular sort of opera which the Roman composer-poets, Francesco Manelli and Benedetto Ferrari, brought into Venice in 1637. It had to adapt itself to the new conditions. We have already spoken of the complication of scenery everywhere imposed upon it: the same was true for the performing of the music. There was indeed no question of being able to pay out of an evening's receipts the sixty or eighty musicians and countless singers commanded by the Pope. The impresarios had to be content with a dozen stringed instruments and two harpsichords, one *di ripieno*, to support the orchestra, the other, played by the maestro, to accompany the recitatives. Two trumpets were usually added to this modest ensemble to play in the overtures and in warlike and triumphal scenes.

At first they did not dare do without the choruses, but they soon became resigned even to this, content with the possibility of calling them in again when the state of the treasury permitted such luxury. On the other hand, they made every sacrifice in

order to obtain the assistance of the best virtuosi, at least at carnival time; for there were three opera seasons in Venice: the first beginning the day after Christmas and ending on the 30th of March, the second (during Ascension) running from the second day after Easter to the 15th of June, the third from the 1st of September to the 30th of November. Announcements were to be seen on the Piazzetta and the Rialto.

The public upon which success depended was now very different from that which had heretofore consisted of invited listeners, and applause for politeness' sake could no longer be counted on. People of all conditions occupied boxes and the parterre, and they had paid admission for the right to see and to judge freely. They wanted their money's worth. It was not easy, especially in time of carnival, to control this undisciplined public which thought only of its own pleasure and not at all of decorum. Young men acclaimed the fair singers, calling them by name, crying "*Mi butto cara,*" and feigning to cast themselves from the height of their boxes the sooner to seize them in their arms.

There was no distinction of place in the hall. The best seats belonged to the first comers, and there was real battling to secure those nearest the stage. The arrangements were scarcely comfortable and one had to be content with a wooden bench or a rustic chair. The hall was not lighted. When the curtain rose, the two chandeliers which had allowed the spectators to find their places, were lowered and extinguished. Those who wanted to read the libretto purchased it on entering, together with the little candle by which to decipher it. They could also procure apples and cooked pears, which served to appease their hunger or, in certain cases, to vent their fury upon the actors. During the entr'actes vendors of fritters, dried chestnuts, and oranges moved about the hall. Coffee was served in the boxes.

Artisans and gondoliers, to whom custom decreed that empty boxes should be turned over, were not the least assiduous attendants at the opera. They pronounced judgments without appeal upon the singers. The game was to recognize the performers under the most fantastic disguises. When a certain priest, renowned as a buffoon, appeared in the costume of a wet-nurse, the whole delighted parterre exclaimed: "*Ecco Pre Piero che fà la vecchia.*"

There were, indeed, many priests and monks who sang in the operas. Only the French or the Germans were astonished at this fact. Was not the same thing done at Rome? Did not the monasteries give performances of opera? Also "the priests make

no scruple to appear upon the stage and play there all sorts of personages . . . on the contrary, the quality of being good actors gives them that of virtuous people"—so we are answered by the *Sieur de Saint-Didier*, who perhaps confused the virtuous and the virtuoso.

The public adored complex intrigues, disguises and recognitions, scenes of violence—rape, assault, murder, combat, fire, pillage—and these the Venetian librettists soon liberally gave them. Sometimes it was in the hall itself that tragedy was enacted. A Mocenigo shot and killed a Toscarini in his box. Disputes and grave disorders often occurred despite the fact that in the eye of the law theatres were privileged places where the slightest violence was a crime against the State. To maintain order, some soldiers and *bravi* with hangman's mien guarded the doors. They were in the pay of the proprietor of the hall. Nor was the government of the Serene Republic indifferent to the conduct of the theatres. Every year the *Proveditori* caused them to be inspected by an architect at the proprietor's expense to test their solidity. It was the Council of Ten which fixed the closing hour.

Certain patrician families seem to have cared but little for the life of the theatre. The Tron family, who owned San Cassiano, simply leased the theatre to Benedetto Ferrari, then to other impresarios. Others, on the contrary, wanted to have a hand in everything. Among these were the Grimani Calergi brothers, who ruled the destiny of the superb theatre of SS. Giovanni e Paolo, erected by their uncle, Giovanni Grimani, theatre-mad and a great builder. In Venice they were looked upon as ardent patrons of opera. All three were passionately fond of it and exercised active control over the troupes they harbored and apparently subsidized—for there was no other way to explain the magnificence of scenery and costumes. They were on friendly terms with the best musicians and poets in the city; the books of many operas were dedicated to them. The eldest, the abbé Vettor Grimani Calergi, ally of the Duke of Mantua, recruited singers for him and cared for the *putti* the Duke sent to Venice for instruction in the art of singing. These patrician brothers were great friends of the arts—if not of their fellow-citizens.

They were redoubtable in other respects as well. They were fairly accused of being accountable to God for the lives of more than 200 persons whom they despatched by poison or the knife. Several times they had been banished from Venice for their crimes, but they braved the decrees and remained, surrounded by a veritable army of hired assassins, until the day when they carried things

a step too far by abducting, at night, in a gondola, as he came away from an opera rehearsal at the Theatre of SS. Giovanni e Paolo, their enemy the Count Querini Strampalia, who was then cruelly murdered under their very eyes in their palace. They were pardoned soon enough and triumphantly reëntered Venice, where they hastened to take down the expiatory statue erected before the house and magnificently rebuilt the left wing of the Palazzo Vendramin, their sumptuous stronghold.

These great gentlemen could do as they liked with a company of singers: clearly it was not well to oppose them. We shall see that Cavalli seems to have been on excellent terms with them and that several books on which he composed operas were dedicated to them as Benefactors of Music.

It is evident from such episodes that the stories of the Venetian operas, incredible as they seem and over-fertile in dramatic incidents, were not so unlike as one might think to the dangerous life of this period, dear to Stendhal. We are astonished to see so many people in travesty upon the stage; but is it any more surprising to see an amorous princess disguise herself as a page to meet the man she loves than to find in the garb of an aged procuress the worthy priest of one's own parish?

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The Teatro San Cassiano opened its doors during the winter of 1637 with *Andromeda*, the poem by Benedetto Ferrari, the music by Francesco Manelli. The credit for this enterprise belongs entirely to Ferrari. In the gallery of remarkable personages which the history of XVIIth century music discloses, he is one of the most extraordinary. A universal spirit, he was known for his poems, his libretti, and his dramas, for his cantatas, for his operas, and for his incomparable manner of playing the theorbo. His adventurous life was passed at Reggio Emilia, where he was born in 1597, and in Rome, where he studied and where his virtuoso's talent won him the surname of *della Tiorba*, while his rare gifts as a composer declared themselves in three books of cantatas published between 1633 and 1641. From Rome he went to Venice, where he introduced opera. In 1645, dispossessed by the Venetians from the theatres in which he had his plays performed, he obtained a place in the ducal chapel of Modena. Six years later we find him in Vienna, where he presented several of his operas, as he had also done at Ratisbon. The Duke of Modena recalled him and made

him maestro di cappella in 1653, but he lost his place in 1662. The new Duke, Francis II, recalled him again in 1674, and he died at Modena, October 22nd, 1681, at the age of 84.

A man of intelligence and even of superior mind, he belongs among those who feel the urge to attempt new things. Simultaneously with Luigi Rossi, perhaps even a little earlier, he undertook the composition of cantatas in the elaboration of which, being both poet and composer, he inevitably played an important rôle. In its beginning the cantata was indeed a literary as well as a musical invention, consisting in a new grouping of forms long known and used. Ferrari's cantatas are striking in their dramatic qualities. It is a great pity that his operas should have been lost, for they must have included music of great beauty, to judge by certain airs in his *Musiche varie a voce sola*.

Being of an ingenious turn of mind, Ferrari saw that interest might be aroused in Venice by the introduction of opera in place of the usual comedies and tragedies. He confided his plan to his friend, that excellent musician Francesco Manelli of Tivoli, himself the author of well-known cantatas and of an opera, *Delia*, which had been performed at Bologna.

Manelli, born at Tivoli about 1595, had grown up in the shadow of that city's cathedral, singing in the choir from the time he was 7 or 8 years old. He had been destined for an ecclesiastical career when his meeting with a cantatrice of the theatre, La Maddalena, turned his life topsy-turvy. He married her, lived for a while in Rome, and then obtained the position of maestro di cappella at the Cathedral of Tivoli. He quitted this post in order to go to Bologna where his *Delia* was sung with success. The year 1636 found him at Venice where his wife published his Opus 4, a book of cantatas for one, two, and three voices. It seems probable that he had come thither at the instigation of Ferrari and that together they were preparing the realization of their great project.

Ferrari, having finally obtained the lease of San Cassiano from the Tron family, put on the opera *Andromeda* entirely at his own expense. He had written the book, Manelli the music. It is apparent from the composition of his troupe that Ferrari had not brought his own singers to Venice but had formed his company on the spot, securing the coöperation of several musicians from San Marco. Manelli, who possessed a superb bass voice, played the parts of Neptune and Astarco the magician; his wife, Maddalena, played Andromeda; D. Annibale Graselli played Mercury, Perseus and Ascala; while the three castrati, Francesco Angeletti, Anselmo

Morcani, and Girolamo Medici, took the parts respectively of Juno, Venus, and Astraea.

From the libretto, which is all that remains to us, it is evident that this opera conformed wholly to the Roman custom and included in its paraphernalia numerous machines and scene-shifting devices invented by the Venetian, Balbi, a choreographer and machinist of extraordinary imagination. Its success was considerable and induced the authors to give in the following year another opera in their own style, *La Maga Fulminata*. Ferrari again made expenses, which did not exceed 2000 crowns, although he was assisted by five or six of the singers who had joined in the arrangement and divided the profits with him.

It seemed as though Ferrari and Manelli were installed for a long régime at San Cassiano, but in the very next year they departed, leaving the field clear to a beginner, Francesco Cavalli, who was to monopolize the theatre for many years and quickly to achieve brilliant renown.

The Grimani, keenly interested in the performance at San Cassiano, decided in 1639 to consecrate to opera their theatre of SS. Giovanni e Paolo, which they completely remodelled for this purpose and endowed with highly perfected machinery. They confided the management at first to Francesco Manelli, who began by presenting his own *Delia*, which he followed with the *Armida*, of which Ferrari had written both words and music, finally calling upon Claudio Monteverdi, whose *Adone* achieved a triumph in the autumn of 1640 and was repeated the following season.

In this same year of 1639, the Teatro San Samuele opened its doors with a revival of Monteverdi's famous *Arianna*. Apparently Ferrari, leaving Manelli in possession, though for but a brief time, of SS. Giovanni e Paolo, acted as impresario for this new theatre. He dedicated a sonnet at the head of the libretto *Al Signor Claudio Monteverdi oracolo della Musica*. He offered in 1640 his own *Pastor Regio*, in 1641 *La Ninfa Avara*, and in 1642 he gave way to Cavalli who in turn presented his *Amore Innamorata* with success. Again in 1644 Ferrari put on his *Principe Giar-diniero*, after which he yielded entirely to Cavalli, who took possession of all the theatres at once.

Meanwhile a fourth theatre had just opened, the Teatro Novissimo, especially arranged for highly spectacular operas. Here Manelli performed his *Alcate* in 1642; then he also gave way before the Venetians, Cavalli, Rovetta, and Sacrati. *La Finta Piazza* of the last-named, thanks to Torelli's amazing machines and the ballets of Balbi, achieved such success that Mazarin

wanted it performed for the French public in 1645 and called Balbi and Torelli to Paris.

After 1644, Venice saw no more performances of operas by the two composers who had had the courage and the initiative to acclimatize this foreign style in the city which had so long refused its acceptance. Ferrari returned to Modena, and Manelli, who had known brilliant success as a singer, entered the choir of San Marco. For a long time the Venetians themselves were to take the lead in the composition and production of opera.

(Translated by M. D. Herter Norton.)

TYAGARAJA : A GREAT SOUTH INDIAN COMPOSER

By ETHEL ROSENTHAL

A RENAISSANCE of Indian music—this is the ideal of many present day enthusiasts, who are endeavoring to raise the art from the lethargy into which it sank during centuries of warfare, invasion, bloodshed. The moment is opportune, therefore, for the attention of Westerners to focus upon the musical expansion of India, more especially because it is certain that within the next few years all lands will be closely linked up by aerial transport, and the facilities for the interchange of visits between the artists of both hemispheres will be enormously increased. The All-India Music Conferences, of which the first was held at Baroda in 1916, have performed signal service in stimulating interest in the position of the art in general, while the recently-formed Madras Music Academy is giving a fillip to the Carnatic or Southern School in particular.

To appreciate the music of both East and West is within the scope of every average amateur, for the fundamental differences prove less than at first imagined. As his ear becomes attuned to Eastern airs, the Westerner realizes that freedom of melody compensates for lack of harmony, and that "quarter-tones" occur more frequently as grace-notes than as integral characteristics of the scales. It is no harder for foreigners to enjoy Tyagaraja's music despite its peculiar idiom, than it is for them to distinguish the nobility of Tyagaraja's character despite the veil of myth, superstition, mysticism with which his life-story has been enveloped by Hindu devotees who consider him to have been a saint.

Tyagaraja was born in 1759 at Thiruvallur, in the Tanjore district; but, although one of the greatest of Indian musicians, he is scarcely known, even by name, beyond the confines of his home land. Such a remarkable man as Abbé Dubois, who lived in Southern India for nearly thirty years during Tyagaraja's lifetime and established contacts with every class of society, was unaware of the composer's existence.¹ Environment, that expert manu-

¹At the fourth All-India Music Conference, held in 1925, Mr. M. S. Ramaswami Aiyar delivered a very informative lecture on Tyagaraja, and H. H. the Maharaja of Mysore enabled the lecturer to publish in Madras an excellent biography of the master. The first edition of this work is exhausted, but the author contemplates an enlarged version specially adapted to the requirements of the American and English markets.

facturer of outlook, played an important rôle in the spiritual molding of the musician, for his father was a *Bhagavathar* or religious preacher, and consequently the young Tyagaraja's devotional inclinations were encouraged from his earliest childhood. Moreover, at Thiruvaiyur, there is a famous temple dedicated to Valmikeswara or Siva, the Destroyer and Reproducer, a member of the Hindu trinity, and his consort, and it is only reasonable to suppose that proximity to this sanctuary must have left an impress on the wax-like sensibility of the budding artist. Another factor that undoubtedly contributed to Tyagaraja's devotionism was his parents' removal, while he was still a youngster, to Thiruvaiyur, a town, according to local tradition, as sacred as Benares itself, and a place of pilgrimage from times prehistoric, much frequented by devotees. The Hindus, receptive and emotional, place Tyagaraja on a pedestal, for they require of their musicians devotion to their gods, purity of mind and simplicity of life, as they maintain that without these virtues it is impossible for the composer-performer to extract the highest from his art. It is greatly to his honor that Tyagaraja rigidly fulfilled these exacting demands according to his lights and, making worship the motive force of his creative work, never lowered the standard of his ideals.

While still a youth, Tyagaraja resolved to devote himself to art, and took lessons from a famous teacher of Thiruvaiyur, skilled in the technique of the Carnatic school. This professor taught him many devotional songs, in the rendering of which the pupil soon excelled the master. So remarkable indeed was the student's ability, that a rumor was circulated to the effect that Narada, the patron sage of music, had descended from heaven expressly to present him with a tome entitled *Swararnavam* dealing with the science of *swaras* or tones. After Tyagaraja's death, this work could not be found, but it is significant that he acknowledged his indebtedness to its teaching in his *krithi* or song called *Swaragasudharasa*. One of his *gurus* or teachers advised him to repeat the name Rama as an act of merit, and it is said that by the time the musician was thirty-seven years of age he had reiterated the designation of the deity ninety-six *crores* of times—one crore equals ten millions, by the way—and that by this self-imposed task he obtained salvation. Tyagaraja was a Brahmin, a member of the highest or priesthood caste, and this fact may account for the bigotry which characterized his youth. His songs, most of which are dedicated to Rama, have been likened to the Psalms of David, for they "reveal the wonderful evolution of the soul of a neophyte right onwards until he reaches the goal. . . . His

hymns are so noble, so sublime, so soul-reaching, that his followers reverently speak of them as *Tyagopanishads*, for to them, they are as sacred as Holy Writ."¹ So closely associated indeed is the name of Tyagaraja with that of Rama, that the musician is considered to be a reincarnation of Valmiki, who is supposed to have composed the Ramayana in the fifth century B. C., and to have returned to earth for the express purpose of creating Tyagaraja's *krithis* from the recitative employed in the interpretation of the epic.

Rama, the hero of the Ramayana epic, came to be regarded as a deity at the commencement of our era, and is worshipped as an incarnation of Vishnu the Preserver, sent to establish righteousness upon earth. In the character of a god, Rama has a vast following, and his service, as a rule, promotes chastity and manly effort, both of which were characteristic traits of Tyagaraja, who mastered the contents of the epic while in his teens. The seven books of the Ramayana contain the history of Rama, the hero who obtained the hand of his bride Sita, after bending her father's giant bow, a feat no one else had been able to accomplish. Subsequently, Rama was exiled from his father's court and, accompanied by Sita and his half-brother Lakshmana, dwelt in the jungle. Their rural existence was disturbed by the rape of Sita, who was transported to Lanka or Ceylon by the ten-headed demon Ravana. Assisted by Sugriva, the monkey king, and Hanuman, his general, Rama rescued his spouse and returned to Ajodhya, where he was crowned. A prey to jealous suspicions, however, he banished Sita to Valmiki's far monastery where she gave birth to twin sons who, in due course, sought out their father and helped to convince him of his wife's innocence. Sita, who is the type of pure Hindu womanhood, was received into the bosom of the earth goddess, but ultimately she and Rama were united in Heaven. A series of performances, comprising the musical narration of the entire Ramayana, is an artistic event greatly appreciated by Indian audiences, and it is probable that *vrithas*, recitative pure and simple, and *kirthanas*,² prayers or narrative, developed from the chanting of the epic. In 1772, there appeared Arunchala Kavi's *Rama Natakam*, a compilation of *vrithas* and *kirthanas* that greatly influenced Tyagaraja who, with the aptitude of genius, developed the lyrical side of his art, and blended the finest characteristics of various styles of narrative and religious compositions. He wrote

¹Remarks of Mr. C. R. Sreenivas Iyengar in the "Daily Express Annual" for 1925.

²The *krithi* is to be distinguished from the *kirthana* by its looser texture, the particular sections of the latter being clearer cut, more decisive, than those of the former.

over five hundred songs and determined to free music from the bonds of language, for he found that elaborate words limited the opportunities for *sangathis* or ornate variations. He was his own author, but troubled little about the literary value of words, for he regarded the musical portion of composition as all-important. He favored Telugu, the most musical, possibly, of Indian vernaculars, known as the "Italian of the East," but did not hesitate to mingle it with Sanskrit. His employment of *sangathis* was unique. In the course of repetition, he introduced extensions and embellishments galore until, at the close of the performance, the *sangathi* contained amazing rhythmic and melodic variations, within the same *avard*, or time limit, as the opening phrase.

Throughout all ages, asceticism has been favored by the Hindus, indeed, all the most esteemed sages of India are believed to have practised austerities. Consequently, there was nothing in any way peculiar about Tyagaraja's renunciation of wealth, position, comfort, nor was there anything *infra dig* in his wandering around the streets of Thiruvaiyar, singing his immortal songs for payment in kind in the shape of food. Moreover, there was no sycophantic element in Tyagaraja's make-up, and, from a Western viewpoint anyway, his stubborn refusal of the invitations of the rulers of Tanjore and Travancore bordered on the discourteous. Yet a man courageous enough to eschew land and money, to withstand the temptation to "get on" materially in the world, because he was fearful of prostituting his art, commands respect from every nation. Of the royal messengers, when they became importunate, he inquired "Are these kings greater than my Rama?" Floored by this query, and marvelling greatly at Tyagaraja's lack of worldly wisdom, the ambassadors withdrew.

Ragas, or melody types, are among the most arresting characteristics of Indian music, and their origin may be traced to devotional songs, scientific compositions and the like. The position of the *amsa* or predominant note is an all-important factor in determining the character of the *raga*. In Southern India, since the middle of the seventeenth century, the *raga* system established by Venkatamakhi has been in force. His classification admits of seventy-two primary *ragas*, known as *melakartas*, or "Lords of Melody," formed by variations of the seven notes of the gamut, in regular order, both ascending and descending. To each *mela* is attached a vast number of secondary *ragas* based on five or more notes of the primary *raga*. Unauthorized accidentals and modulations are taboo, and each *raga* produces a distinctive and characteristic effect. Until the advent of Tyagaraja, only a few *ragas*

were in general use among Carnatic musicians. The total number in *Rama Natakam*, for instance, amounted to about twenty. Tyagaraja, however, employed more than twice that quantity and, in certain of his songs, introduced every feasible combination of notes within the *raga*. Moreover he rescued many rare *ragas* that were sinking into oblivion, by utilizing them adroitly in his *krithis*. *Ragas* may be interpreted only at the particular hour or season to which they are considered to be appropriate, and the twenty-four hours are divided into several periods. A specimen time schedule drawn up by a South Indian musician is given below, but there is considerable diversity of opinion as to the exact duration of each spell.

First Period	6—8.30 a. m.
Second Period	8.30—11 a. m.
Third Period	11 a. m.—1.30 p. m.
Fourth Period	1.30—4 p. m.
Fifth Period	4—6 p. m.
Sixth Period	6—9 p. m.
Seventh Period	9 p. m.—1 a. m.
Eighth Period	1—3 a. m.
Ninth Period	3—6 a. m.

Phenomenal powers are attributed to certain *ragas* when adequately performed. Hence the belief that Tyagaraja restored a dead man to life by passing his hands over the corpse and singing a *krithi* in *Amirithavahini raga*.

Tyagaraja paid great attention to the relations existing between singer and accompanist, insisting that the former occupy the front of the stage, and the latter remain in the background so as to secure artistic balance. It is unfortunate that his successors do not always adopt this arrangement, for in the East as in the West, vocalists are frequently overpowered by their instrumental colleagues. He was intent upon a simplicity of instruments and, for string work, favored the *vina*, the national instrument of India. The southern *vina* consists of a large hollow wooden bowl that supports the bridge while beneath, close to the neck, is a gourd that serves both as rest and resonator. There are twenty-four frets so that each string contains two octaves. Four of the strings pass over the frets, while the remaining three, attached at the side of the fingerboard, furnish a sort of drone accompaniment. The two thinnest strings are of steel and the other main strings of brass or silver.¹ In place of the plectrum used by amateurs,

¹Strict Hindus have a prejudice against the use of gut which they regard as unclean. Hence their predilection for metal strings.

professional musicians perform with their finger nails. Some of the finest *vinas* are manufactured at Tanjore and Mysore. In the former centre, jackwood is the most popular material for the bowl and in the latter, blackwood.

The drone is an integral part of Indian musical performances and furnishes the stability which, in Europe, is provided by harmony. Tyagaraja utilized the time-honored *tambura* for the purpose. The one brass and three steel strings are played with the fingers, and never stopped, but, to produce a buzzing effect, pieces of quill or silk are inserted between the strings and bridge. One of the most famous *tamburas* in India was associated with Tyagaraja, although it did not belong to him. The owner of this remarkable instrument, which was furnished with seven, instead of the usual four strings, was Govinda Marar, one of Tyagaraja's contemporaries, who journeyed especially to Thiruvaiyar by bullock cart, that most tedious of all conveyances, to visit the composer-saint. Marar stirred Tyagaraja's enthusiasm by his singing to his multi-stringed *tambura* which, until recently, was preserved at Pandharpur in the Deccan, where it was venerated as much for being a link with Tyagaraja as for the sake of its renowned master. The meeting between Tyagaraja and Marar took place about 1838, and on this occasion, Marar demonstrated his marvellous technique by singing in *shadkala* or sextuple time, diminishing the note values six times over until he was performing *prestissimo*. When Marar had concluded this astonishing *tour de force*, Tyagaraja extemporized a song in his rival's honor. Too broad-minded for petty jealousies, the saint of Thiruvaiyar was perfectly genuine when he exclaimed:—"Many are the great men in the world and to all of them I pay my respects!"

Tyagaraja's favorite percussion instrument was the *mridanga*, the most esteemed of Indian drums, which possesses two parchment-covered heads tuned by means of braces. A mixture of boiled rice, water and ashes is applied to one end to increase the resonance and is removed after each performance. The other head, with an "eye" consisting of a paste of rice, manganese dust and tamarind juice that is permanently affixed, is played by the fingers of the right hand.

More markedly in India, probably, than in any other land, musical time is a development of poetic meter. In the Carnatic musical system, *tala* or time based upon the *akshara* or syllable is of seven varieties, each one of which is sub-divided into five *jatis* or classes, named according to the number of *aksharas* in the principal beat. Tyagaraja limited himself to five of these thirty-

five categories, although it has been alleged that as many as one hundred and eight *tala* combinations are feasible.

To attempt to free Tyagaraja from his fetters of superstition and idolatry, when glimpsing the man and his masterpieces, is a thankless task—one not to be undertaken thoughtlessly—for the suppression of the supernatural vein running through his life-story, as recounted by devotees, necessitates the rejection of much information pertaining to the why and wherefore of his inspiration. Some of his most charming melodies for example, were improvised in praise of the golden image of Rama that he venerated as though it were the deity himself. Each day he bathed the idol in rose water and offered it milk, performing devotional songs the while, and when the musician's brother, in a fit of jealousy, cast the figure into the Cauvery, one of India's many sacred rivers, Tyagaraja's grief knew no bounds. For a whole year the composer interceded with Rama for the recovery of his treasure until, eventually, in a dream, he visualized the spot in the river bed where the image lay. When viewed from the coldly critical angle of vision, Tyagaraja's fanaticism may appear puerile, yet to anyone who has visited places of Hindu pilgrimage his religious fervor is not only comprehensible but natural, for the exhibition of devotional enthusiasm on the occasion of a festival in any holy centre of India beggars description. For instance, despite twentieth-century police restrictions, casualties still occur occasionally at Puri during the Jagannath celebrations, when the ecstatic votaries drag the deity's unwieldy car, in violation of every "Safety First" precaution evolved by a paternal government.

In the past, musical instruction in India was mainly, if not exclusively, oral. In these circumstances, therefore, Tyagaraja was wise to discourage those of his pupils possessed of a gift of improvisation from interpreting his compositions, for he wished to insure his works against mutilation by the insertion of unsuitable ornamentation. Furthermore, he did not permit his few trusted disciples to imitate his own peculiar style, or to study the works of other composers. Despite the hedge of restrictions by means of which he hoped to avoid cheap popularity, his music found its way direct to the hearts of the people, and, not long since, certain municipal authorities decided to restrict the public performances of Tyagaraja's songs to one day or evening per week, so as to prevent poverty-stricken laborers from spending their all on these entertainments, instead of buying essentials for their families. To witness the crowd enthusiasm at a Tyagaraja recital is an unforgettable experience.

In India, the question of standard notation has resulted in much ink-spilling and vituperation, and, as yet, the problem is unsolved. Some thirty years since, Mr. Chinnaswami Mudaliyar advocated the use of staff notation and, in illustration of his theory, transcribed a number of Tyagaraja's songs. Though perhaps not entirely satisfying, his attempts are of real value owing to their sound musicality. It is regrettable that his publication is now out of print, for it comprises much information of interest to students of Indian music in general and of Tyagaraja's creative work in particular, and is a most noteworthy attempt to bridge the gulf separating the music of East and West:

The unfettered use of accidentals in European music is regarded by the Carnatic musician as due to want of principle and system; for he has at his own disposal no less than seventy other modes or *melakartas* and nearly a thousand derivative *ragas* to which he can divert his attention when he is tired of what correspond to the European major and minor scales. These afford him sufficient pleasure and variety; and he is enraptured by the exquisite finish of the compositions themselves viewed as works of art from his own standpoint, and by their strict adherence to the numberless rules and regulations governing them. He therefore views with special jealousy every attempt to tarnish the purity of his ideal of melodic perfection by means of notes not admissible under his rules.

As regards each melody-mold, the distinguishing marks are so clear that it is considered highly derogatory to a musician of even moderate skill and proficiency to be unable to identify a *raga* from its general configuration.

The frequent repetition of the same cluster of notes which constitutes the physiognomy of the *raga* thus becomes indispensable, but is considered by no means tiresome or monotonous. When a musician of real skill and taste takes up one of his favorite *ragas*, he labors for hours together in bringing out its several beauties, and an appreciative listener considers it no more tedious than when he is engaged for a length of time in interesting conversation with an intimate friend.

With reference to the last remark it is worth while to note that at the 1929 Conference of the Madras Music Academy, the curtailment of repetitions of the *pallavi*—the section containing the principal subject—was recommended, for in these days, excessive reiteration is regarded by many knowledgable listeners as a mere waste of time.

Mudaliyar referred to the custom among Indian composers of introducing their name, or some other identification mark, into their works, and reproduced Tyagaraja's signature in many transcriptions of the great Southerner's songs. It occurs in *Ennadu*

Zutuno and *Raghunáyaka* both composed by Tyagaraja in honor of Rama, of which extracts are given below.¹

Ennadu Zutuno

Primary Raga Chakravaka*
Associated with love
May be performed at any hour

Raga Kalavati
Music and words by
Tyagaraja

Arohana (Ascent) Avarohana or Avaro (Descent)

Pallavi I M. M. ♩ = 144 (To be performed with earnest longing)

II

III & IV III IV

Anupallavi I

II

III IV

Tyagaraja's signature in "Ennadu Zutuno"

Tya - ga - ra - ja

*B is *varja*, omitted, in this raga and E is *varja* in the ascending scale.

In "Ennadu Zutuno" the composer invoked Rama, the *tilaka* or caste mark on the forehead of the Solar dynasty, and in *Raghunáyaka* he exclaimed:

¹These and other examples of Tyagaraja's compositions taken from Mudaliyar's *Oriental Music in European Notation*, are included in *Indian Music and Its Instruments*, by E. Rosenthal (William Reeves, London, 1928), and the musical illustrations of this article are reproduced by kind permission of the publishers.

Raghunáyaka! I cannot leave your lotus-like feet! Driving away illusion and protecting me, you are the Saviour! Unable to cross the ocean of births and deaths, exhausted, I sought your protection, Lord of Sita! Ever joyful Protector!

Raghunáyaka

Primary Raga Sankarabharana*
Associated with peace
To be performed in the morning

Raga Hamsadhvani
Employed in songs of love and devotion
Music and words by
Tyagaraja

Arohana (Ascent) Avarohana or Avaro (Descent)

Pallavi I M. M. ♩ = 144 II

III

IV

Fine

Anupallavi I II & III

II III

§

Tyagaraja's signature in "Raghunáyaka"

Tya - ga - ra - ja nu - ta

*Compare with the European major mode, noting the difference in the sixth.

Tyagaraja's career may be divided into various periods according to his spiritual development. In the first, he devoted himself exclusively to the worship of Rama. Gradually his outlook widened, and as his tolerance increased, he offered praises to the

various deities of the Hindu pantheon. Eventually, as old age advanced, he became a *sannyasi*, in accordance with Hindu tenets, and in this, the final stage of existence, abandoned all earthly ties, for the *sannyasi* is required to live by mendicancy on the charity of others. As a result of this religious advocacy of beggary, no Hindu is ashamed to accept alms or to relinquish his duties as a citizen.¹

The doctrine of metempsychosis or transmigration of souls is firmly rooted in the Hindu mind. According to this credence, the present condition of life is the result of past actions, and the ambition of every good Hindu should be to lead so pure an existence that he will be liberated from reincarnation, whilst his soul, after death, will be reunited with the Infinite Spirit from which it sprang. When Tyagaraja was nearing ninety years of age, Rama is believed to have appeared and announced that in view of the musician's spirituality he would require to be reborn but once. The saintly composer however interceded so fervently for exemption from reincarnation that his patron deity eventually promised this privilege. Ten days later, the spirit of Tyagaraja ascended to unite with the Eternal, the while miraculous flowers fell from the sky. It is not customary to cremate a *sannyasi's* corpse, consequently the dead body was buried with great pomp and ceremony on the banks of the Cauvery, where a magnificent mausoleum was erected in his honor. The annual celebrations at this monument have developed into a musical festival of several days' duration, and in other localities Tyagaraja's anniversary is commemorated with great religious enthusiasm born of intensity of faith—an enthusiasm so infectious that it stirs the heart of every spectator irrespective of caste or creed.

¹"A Brahmin is not allowed to become a *sannyasi* in a moment of remorse or from a sudden feeling of enthusiasm. His decision must be the result of calm and deliberate self-examination and reflection, and must be based on a sense of disgust for the world and its pleasures, and on an ardent desire to attain spiritual perfection. He must feel himself capable of complete severance from all earthly affairs. If he experiences the slightest inclination or longing for those things which the rest of mankind struggle for, he will thereby lose all the benefits of his life of penance." *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, by Abbé J. A. Dubois, Oxford Clarendon Press, 1899.

THE HEWITT FAMILY IN AMERICAN MUSIC

By JOHN TASKER HOWARD

IN the history of our American music there are many names forgotten to-day, but highly important in their own time. The music that these men wrote is likewise forgotten, and artistically it may be of little importance, but it was characteristic of the period, and significant in helping to shape what some day may prove to be a native art.

The researches of O. G. Sonneck uncovered many valuable and interesting things. They showed that former histories of American music had been one-sided, and that an account of our early musical life should by no means be written from Boston exclusively. In addition to discovering the musical side of our first native poet-composer, Francis Hopkinson, and securing invaluable data on the life and work of James Lyon, Sonneck also established the existence of many immigrants who came to this country after the Revolution, and his various books trace their activities to the close of the 18th century. Musically these aliens were more important than our native musicians, and, as most of them stayed here and became Americans, they are certainly entitled to consideration as American artists.

One of the most interesting of these immigrants was James Hewitt, who was himself a prime factor in the musical life of New York and Boston, and who established a line of descendants who are still carrying on the family tradition of music. Sonneck's account of Hewitt's activities covers only eight of the thirty-five years he lived in America, but the facts of those eight years were enough to arouse my curiosity regarding him. Through the courtesy of two of his descendants (Mr. Hobart Hewitt, of Burlington, N. J., a grandson; and Miss Carrie W. Hewitt, of Baltimore, a great-granddaughter) I have had access to the family records, and have been able to piece together some facts regarding this interesting musical family.

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In September of the year 1792 the *New York Daily Advertiser* told its readers that James Hewitt, Jean Gehot, B. Bergmann,

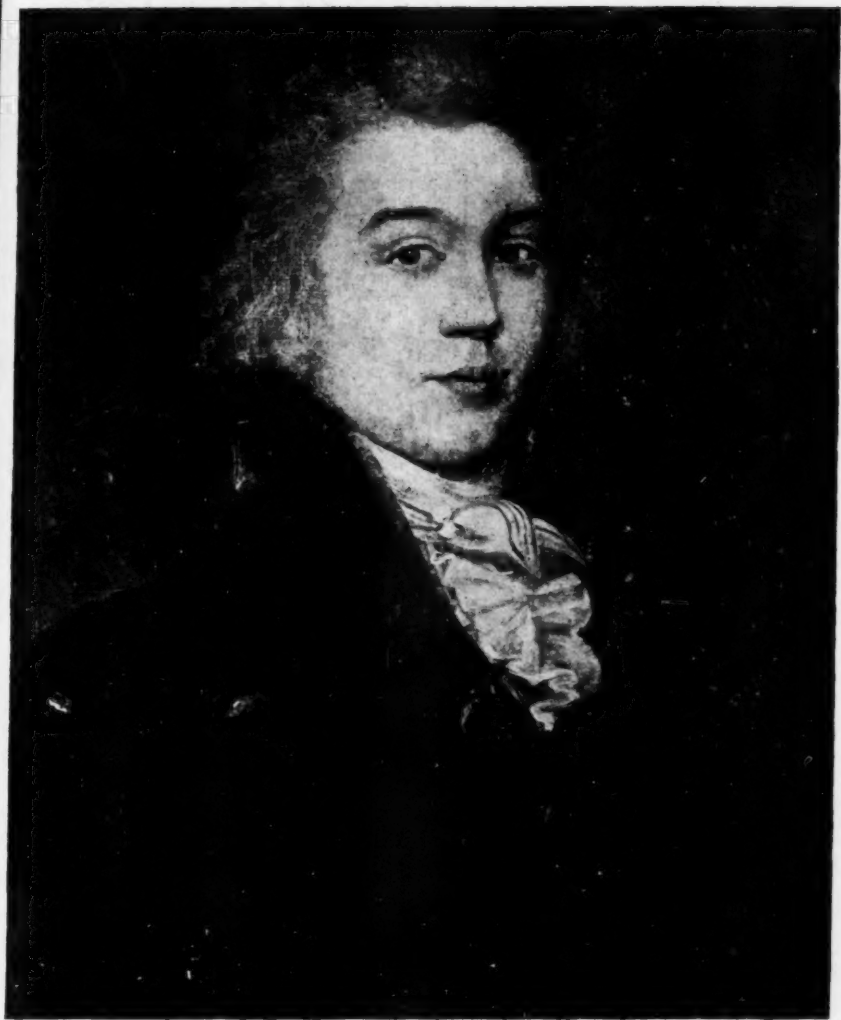
William Young and a gentleman named Phillips, "professors of music from the Opera house, Hanoversquare, and Professional Concerts under the direction of Haydn, Pleyel, etc., London," had arrived in town, and that they would give a concert on the 21st of the month at Corre's Hotel, at which "they humbly hoped to experience the kind patronage of the ladies and gentlemen, and public in general."

Hewitt, Gehot and Bergmann were violinists, Phillips played the 'cello and Young the flute, so they provided among themselves the nucleus of an orchestra which was no doubt augmented by assistant performers. The program is one of the most interesting of those that have been preserved from this period. It shows that the members of this little group were possessed of imagination, whatever else they may have offered. There was an overture by Haydn, a *Quartetto* by Pleyel, and a symphony and flute *Quartetto* by Stamitz. Mr. Phillips contributed a violoncello concerto of his own, and the balance of the evening was devoted to two works of major proportions by Hewitt and Gehot.

Of these, the first was Hewitt's "Overture in 9 movements, expressive of a battle," which pictured successively: 1. Introduction; 2. Grand March, the army in motion; 3. The Charge for the attack; 4. A National Air; 5. The Attack commences, in which the confusion of an engagement is heard; 6. The Enemy surrender; 7. The grief of those who are made prisoners; 8. The Conqueror's quick-march; 9. The Finale. Hewitt probably wrote this overture before he left England, inspired by the vogue of Kotzwara's "Battle of Prague."

Gehot's work was no doubt composed on American soil, and was more personal in its program. It was called an "Overture, in 12 movements, expressive of a voyage from England to America." Here was program music in its most detailed suggestion: 1. Introduction; 2. Meeting of the adventurers, consultation and their determination on departure; 3. March from London to Gravesend; 4. Affectionate separation from their friends; 5. Going on board, and pleasure at recollecting the encouragement they hope to meet with in a land where merit is sure to gain reward [a sly hint]; 6. Preparation for sailing, carpenter's hammering, crowing of the cock, weighing anchor, etc.; 7. Storm; 8. A Calm; 9. Dance on deck by the passengers; 10. Universal joy on seeing land; 11. Thanksgiving for safe arrival; 12. Finale.

Hewitt soon became active in promoting subscription concerts in New York, first as a rival to the established series, and later in combination with older managers—Henri Capron, Sali-



James Hewitt at the age of 21, one year before he came to America. He appears in his court dress, as leader of the orchestra of George III.

From a painting made in London in 1791.



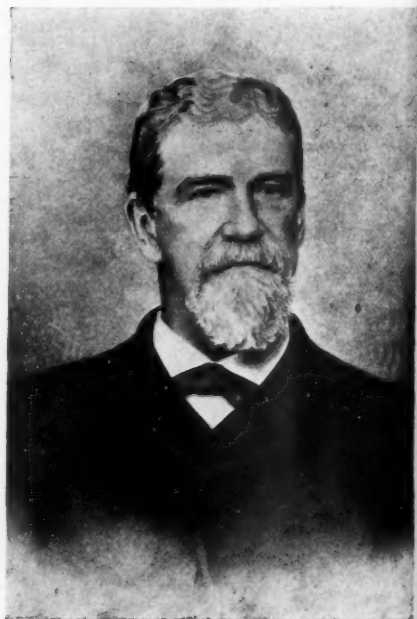
George Washington Hewitt (left) and
John Hill Hewitt (right)



John Hill Hewitt, in middle life



Eliza Hewitt



Horatio Dowes Hewitt

ment, and the Van Hagens. He became associated with the orchestra of the Old American Company as leader, and arranger and adapter of music for ballad operas. Sonneck also found him as leader of the band at the summer concerts of Joseph Delacroix, the caterer, which were held in the house and garden of "the late alderman Bayard," renamed "Vaux Hall Gardens," where the two shillings admission entitled patrons "to a glass of ice cream punch," and the privilege of witnessing the fireworks "made by the celebrated Mr. Ambrose."

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Hewitt was born in Dartmoor, England, June 4, 1770. His father was Captain John Hewitt of the British Navy, a generous and brave man who later followed his son to America, where he lived until he was killed by a fall from his chaise in 1804—one hundred and one years of age. James entered the navy when he was a young lad, but resigned as a midshipman when his sensitive nature resented the cruel treatment of the sailors on board the man-of-war. He was talented musically, and his father decided to give him a musical education. Family accounts say that he studied under Viotti, in London, but according to Grove's Dictionary Viotti did not come to London until 1792, so if Hewitt actually took lessons from him, it can hardly have been in London, for Hewitt was in New York in September of that year.

The boy's progress was rapid. Before he came to New York he was leader of the Court Orchestra of George III. He was intimate with the Prince of Wales, and the future George IV gave him an Amati 'cello, valued at \$500. In 1790 he married a Miss Lamb, but his wife and child died a year later, and he decided to move to America.

According to the city directories he lived in New York almost continuously from 1792 to 1812. In addition to his concert work, and the direction of the theatre orchestra, he was for a time organist of Trinity Church. In 1798 he purchased the New York branch of Benjamin Carr's Musical Repository, and established a publishing business, which was later carried on by his son, James L. Hewitt, until the middle of the next century. From 1805 to 1809 he was director of all the military bands of the city and commanded the 3rd Company of artillery.

On December 10, 1795, Hewitt married a second time. His bride was the youthful Eliza King, and the ceremony was performed at Trinity Church by Bishop Moore. Eliza was the

daughter of Sir John King of the Royal British Army, who had come to America to settle some estates that had been bequeathed to his wife. Had Hewitt attended properly to securing the property in his wife's behalf, his descendants would have been wealthy. But Hewitt was never a good business man.

His second wife was an accomplished woman. She had been educated in Paris, and was there during the years of the French Revolution. At the time of the Reign of Terror she was confined for safety in the Bastille with her mother. She saw the guillotine in action, and would often recount its gruesome work with a shudder. She knew Napoleon Bonaparte when he was first making a name for himself.

The Hewitts had six children, of whom we shall hear more later. The wife survived her husband by many years, and lived until 1865, when she died at the home of her youngest son in Burlington, N. J.

In 1812 the family moved to Boston, where Hewitt took charge of the music at the Federal Street Theatre. He was also organist of Boston's Trinity Church. His name appears in the Boston directories until 1816, and in 1818 it reappears in New York. In that year he is listed as living at 20 Harrison Street, and in 1819 at 87 Warren Street. There is no entry for 1820, and he appears again in Boston in 1821. Possibly the gap is supplied by an item I have found in the collection of Mr. Joseph Muller at Closter, N. J.—a setting of the "Star Spangled Banner" . . . "composed by J. Hewitt, New York. Published by J. Hewitt, Musical Repository, No. 156 $\frac{1}{2}$ William Street. Engraved by T. Birch, 38 Vesey St., N. Y."¹

The piece is undated, and neither Hewitt nor Birch appear in any New York directories at these addresses. The first entry of Birch is in 1820, at 431 Pearl St. Assuming that directory entries generally refer to preceding years, we may venture a guess that Hewitt was in New York, at the William Street address in 1816 or 1819, and the directory missed him, and that Birch was on Vesey Street just before he established himself on Pearl Street.

Hewitt was evidently in Boston for only a year the second time, for the 1822 directory lists Eliza Hewett [*sic*], teacher of music, at the Federal Street address. This may have been his wife,

¹The Boston Public Library has had a copy of this rare piece for several years. In 1930 a third copy appeared, in the possession of C. A. Strong and C. J. Nagy of Philadelphia. I am convinced that the latter is not a first edition, as it bears the publishing imprint of J. A. & W. Geib instead of that of Hewitt, who unquestionably published the first edition himself. I have discussed my reasons for this opinion in *The Musical Courier* of December 6, 1930.—J. T. H.

or his daughter. It was probably the latter, although there is evidence that James Hewitt and his wife separated somewhere around this time. He must have travelled somewhat during the next few years, for Parker's *Euterpiad* refers to a "grand oratorio" he conducted in Augusta, Georgia (1821), and in the family accounts there are references to Southern theatrical companies in which he was interested. In 1826 he was succeeded by George Gillingham as director of the Park Theatre, New York. Presumably Hewitt was there when Manuel Garcia brought New York its first taste of Italian opera.

It is quite definitely established that he died in 1827, though we cannot be sure whether his death occurred in New York or Boston. For a time he had been estranged from his wife, and while she lived in Boston with their son James, Hewitt was boarding in New York. There is in existence a series of letters written to James L. Hewitt, by the father, late in 1826, and in January, 1827. They show that Hewitt was very ill, and it is not likely that he could have made the trip to Boston. According to Grove, he died in New York, but some of the family accounts speak of his death in Boston.

These last letters are interesting. They speak of his work, his financial and personal affairs. Some references throw light on the surgery of the period.

Dec. 27, 1826—This day at 12 o'clock closes the 6 weeks since the operation was performed, and I am at present no better for it.

Jan. 26, 1827—In a conversation I've had with Dr. Mott, he acknowledged the Lachrymal duct was cut but not so as to destroy its usefulness—but that is not the complaint, my present sufferings are from some part of Jaw being left which was injured at the finishing of the operation before he closed the wound (he had been cutting away part of my nose) I heard him say to his assistant that there appeared some small part yet but he thought it would be of no consequence and did not wish to continue my sufferings—therefore had the wounds closed. . . . My sufferings are great and my death slow, but certain. I hope my dear James you will be here to receive my last breath. I feel the want of home—tho every kind attention is paid me here—yet my heart longs once more to behold my family.

In an undated letter he refers to his manuscripts:

In the large Red Box my clothes. In the smaller Red Box all manuscripts which I think you had better be careful of, they may eventually be of value to you. Among those Mans Books you may find music worth your printing. A Box for the whole of the Theatrical music, should you wish to pack it, is in the cellar, but I believe they have burnt the lids.

He had neglected looking after his own father's property, as well as that belonging to his wife:

I did mean, if it pleased God to have spared my life, to have made secret inquiries respecting my father's affairs. Is it to be supposed that he could live here thirty years without some means? There are persons to whom he has lent money which has never been paid. What has become of the acknowledgments, and previous to his death he was known to have plenty of money. On his deathbed . . . he had something of importance to communicate! Be assured there is something wrong, which if it had pleased God, my dear James, to have suffered me to have lived, I should have endeavoured to have found out.

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A number of Hewitt's works are preserved in libraries, and while they represent his less ambitious efforts, they nevertheless show that he was important in the development of American music. Many of his songs were early forerunners of our modern sentimental ballads. While none of them descended to the mawkish depths that our popular songs were to achieve in the middle 19th century, they nevertheless show "heart" tendencies that were prophetic. "The Music of the Harp of Love," "The Wounded Hussar," "When the Shades of Night Pursuing" (New York Public Library) and "How Happy Was Her Humble Lot" (Library of Congress) are illustrative of this trend.

A year after his arrival Hewitt advertised for subscriptions to a book of songs which he had written and compiled in association with Mrs. Pownall, the actress.

Flatter'd by the unbounded applause which the songs of the Primrose Girl, Jemmy of the Glen, etc. have met with in this city and Philadelphia, M. A. Pownall and J. Hewitt, are induced to publish them (with four others entirely new) arranged for the Harpsichord and Pianoforte. A work which they hope will do credit to themselves and give satisfaction to those Ladies and Gentlemen who will please to honor them by becoming subscribers.

Mr. Muller's collection at Closter, N. J., contains another Hewitt item which may have some relation to the battle overture that was played by the Hewitt-Gehot group when they first came to New York. This is a "military sonata," "The Battle of Trenton," "composed for the pianoforte by James Hewitt. Philadelphia: Published by G. E. Blake, Price 125 cents." Blake started business in Philadelphia in 1804, so the publication of Hewitt's "sonata" must be dated after that. Possibly it was an entirely fresh work, but its program has a curious resemblance

to the "overture, in 9 movements, expressive of a battle," with American events substituted for those of more general reference. The program, as noted on the score, is as follows:

Introduction—The Army in motion—General Orders—Acclamation of the Americans—Drums beat to Arms.

Washington's March—The American Army Crossing the Delaware—Sound a Charge.

Attack—cannons—bomb. Defeat of the Hessians—Flight of the Hessians—Begging Quarter—The Fight Renewed—General Confusion—The Hessians surrender themselves Prisoners of War—Articles of Capitulation Signed—Grief of Americans for the loss of their comrades killed in the engagement.

Yankee Doodle—Drums and Fifes—Quick Step for the Band—Trumpets of Victory—General Rejoicing.

The Library of Congress has recently acquired further James Hewitt items. One of them is a set of Three Sonatas for the Pianoforte, Opus 5, printed for the author at Carr's Musical Repository, William Street (New York). These can probably be dated about 1796. The other item is "The 4th of July—A Grand Military Sonata for the Pianoforte." This piece was published by Hewitt at 59 Maiden Lane, and as he was at that address between 1801 and 1811, the work was evidently published before he went to Boston. Its program is characteristic:

Daybreak; Cannon; Assembling of the People; Distant March; Horse advancing; Trumpet; March; The artillery; Rifle men; Quick step; Infantry; Quick March; Allegro con spirito; Firing small arms; The reveillee (fife and drum); Shouts of the populace; Hail Columbia; Finale.

Among the most interesting items in his work for the theatre is Hewitt's music for the "opera," "Tammany," one of the very early ballad-operas written in this country. It was produced in New York in 1794 under the auspices of the Tammany Society, the ancestor of the present Tammany Hall. The libretto was written by Mrs. Anne Julia Hatton, a sister of Mrs. Siddons, and wife of a musical instrument maker in New York. In those days feeling between the Federalists and anti-Federalists ran high, and Mrs. Hatton was an ardent supporter of the anti-Federalists who were agitating American support of the French Revolution. The powerful Tammany Society was also anti-Federalist, and so Mrs. Hatton chose as her subject the society's patron, the Indian Chief, Tammany, and used the wrongs of the Indians as an analogy for what was happening to the poor French people.

The production aroused a storm of controversy. The anti-Federalists hailed it with fervor, and the Federalists denounced

it as a "wretched thing" and "literally a *mélange* of bombast" (which it no doubt was). One writer went so far as to accuse the promoters of attracting an audience by circulating a rumor that a party had been gathered to hiss the performance. The actual disturbance that occurred was probably provoked by Hewitt's refusing to respond immediately with a popular air when called upon by the gallery; a custom that caused considerable annoyance to theatre orchestra leaders in those days.

It is not known whether any of Hewitt's music for "Tammany" was published, although proposals were issued for printing the "overture with the songs, choruses etc., etc., to Tammany as composed and adapted to the pianoforte by Mr. Hewitt." Hewitt composed original music to a number of ballad operas, and no doubt the box with the burnt lids contained the scores. A pity they are lost to historians and students of our early music! In 1794 he wrote a score for "The Patriot, or Liberty Asserted," "founded on the well-known story of William Tell, the Swiss patriot who shot an apple from his son's head at the command of tyrant Grislor." Rossini had several predecessors in America, for in 1796 Benjamin Carr's "The Archers of Switzerland" (often erroneously called the first opera written in America) dealt with the William Tell theme. Others of Hewitt's works were "The Mysterious Marriage"; "Pizarro, or the Spaniards in Peru" (an adaptation of Kotzebue's work); "Robin Hood"; "The Spanish Castle, or Knight of the Guadalquivir"; and "The Wild Goose Chase." He also wrote "music representative of each passion" for John Hodgkinson's recitation of Collin's "Ode," before the Anacreontic Society of New York in 1795.

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Of James Hewitt's sons, the most important was John Hill Hewitt, who has sometimes been called the "father of the American ballad." This is obviously a rather strong term to use for a man whose songs are forgotten to-day. Yet while few of them are sung at all now, they were once so popular that their composer had a decided influence in shaping the style of our lighter ballads. Moreover, his long life was so varied, and his exploits so colorful, that he occupies a unique position in both the musical and literary history of America. Any man who won a poetry contest against Edgar Allan Poe is interesting as a curiosity, if for no other reason.

In spite of his accomplishments and later achievements, John's versatility made him something of a rolling stone. This

worried his father, and in his last letters to his younger son, James (in whom he seemed to have great confidence), the elder Hewitt was troubled by John's ways:

John I am still uneasy about. When you see him, or write, tell him his father in his latter moments did not forget him—left him his blessing, with the hope that he will turn his mind to one particular object, that he may get thro the world respected.

A few weeks later:

In the *Weekly Mirror* and *Advertiser* of here [New York] I see the last two papers have poetry of John's. Very pretty, but he ought to write to me.

And again:

. . . there is a reserve in my character which others have said was pride. No—it has been that I should not force myself into others' company. John unfortunately has this latter—it is right for a young man to be in some degree reserved—but in case of business that must in a great degree be laid aside, as it is necessary to have some degree of effrontery to get on in the world. This I am afraid will keep John, with all his talents, poor like myself. It is a fact that a man with independence, without talent, will make a fortune, while the modest man, let his talents be ever so great, will be kept in the background.

John, as we shall see, never let modesty deter him in later life.

This eldest son of James Hewitt was born in Maiden Lane, New York, July 11th, 1801. When the family moved to Boston in 1812, the boy was placed in the public schools, and later apprenticed to a sign painter. He disliked this so much that he ran away. Maybe his sudden departure was encouraged by his action when he was told to mahoganize the door of a client. On one of the panels he drew the likeness of the owner, on the other that of a hog, and above he painted the inscription—"My hog and I."

He next entered the employ of a commission firm named Lock and Andrews, and stayed with this concern until it failed a few years later. By this time the family had moved back to New York, and in 1818 John secured an appointment to West Point. Various legends have sprung up regarding his career at the military academy, one to the effect that he was breveted a second lieutenant after three years of study. Another story tells that at the end of four years he graduated, but resigned his commission immediately. Still another tradition connects him with a plot of the Southern cadets to get control of the academy and blow up the superintendent in 1820.

None of these accounts is accurate. The records of the War Department show that Hewitt was admitted to West Point from New York on September 21, 1818. When he was a member of the graduating class in 1822 he was turned back to the next line class because of deficiency in studies, and did not return the following year. There is no official record of his participation in a disturbance.

At the time of his death, in 1890, an obituary notice in the *Baltimore American* said that his fellow-students at West Point included B. Beauregard, Robert E. Lee, Polk, Johnson and Jackson. While he was at the academy he studied music with Willis, leader of the academy band, and when he left and went South, he turned to music teaching as the pleasantest way to earn a living. He also commenced editorial work, and became associated with newspapers in the various cities he lived in. Soon after leaving West Point he married his first wife, Estelle Mangin, who bore him seven children.

Shortly after John Hewitt's marriage, his father persuaded him to join a theatrical company he was organizing to tour the South. The venture ended in failure, and the company was burned out in a fire in Augusta, Georgia. John stayed in Augusta for a short while, and then went to Columbia, South Carolina, where he taught music, composed and commenced the study of law. From Columbia he went to Greenville, and established a newspaper called the *Republican*. Meeting with reverses he returned to Augusta.

It was about this time that he composed his first song—"The Minstrel's Return from the War." On the original manuscript, now in the Library of Congress, the composer in later years pencilled the following memorandum:

This song, as crude as it is, was one of my first musical efforts. It was composed in 1825 in the village of Greenville, S. C., now a city of 10,000 souls. When I returned to the North, I took this book with me to Boston. My brother James was a music publisher. I gave him a copy to publish—he did it very reluctantly—did not think it worthy of a copy-right. It was eagerly taken up by the public, and established my reputation as a ballad composer. It was sung all over the world—and my brother, not securing the right, told me that he missed making at least \$10,000.

John returned to the North when his father died in 1827. He stayed for a short time in Boston, and worked on the staff of the *Massachusetts Journal*. He soon departed for the South, intending to return to Georgia, but a visit to Baltimore determined

him to stay there, and he spent the greater part of his long life in that city.

In Baltimore he became active in newspaper work, music and matters theatrical. He was achieving some fame as composer and poet. He became editor of the *Visitor*, and when that paper sponsored a literary contest, he entered a poem under a *nom de plume*. He called it "The Song of the Wind," and it was awarded the prize over Edgar Allan Poe's "The Coliseum." In his book of memories, "Shadows on the Wall" (1877), Hewitt told the story of the contest:

The proprietors of the journal . . . offered two premiums; one of \$100 for the best story, another of \$50 for the best poem. I was editor of the paper at the time. The committee on the awards decided that Poe's weird tale, entitled "A Manuscript found in a Bottle," should receive first premium. There were two poems selected from the four-score offered, as worthy of the second award. They were "The Coliseum" by Poe, and "The Song of the Wind" by myself. The judges were brought to a stand, but, after some debate, agreed that the latter should receive the second prize, as the author of the former had already received the first. This decision did not please Poe, hence the "little unpleasantness" between us. Poe received his money with many thanks; I preferred a silver goblet, which is now in my family.

The opening stanza of Hewitt's poem was as follows:

Whence come ye with your odor-laden wings,
Oh, unseen wanderer of the summer night?
Why, sportive, kiss my lyre's trembling strings,
Fashioning wild music, which the light
Of listening orbs doth seem in joy to drink?
Ye wanton 'round my form and fan my brow,
While I hold converse with the stars that wink
And laugh upon the mirror stream below.

The "little unpleasantness" between Poe and Hewitt had had fuel to feed it several years before the contest. When a volume of Poe's poems (*Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane and Other Poems*) had appeared three years earlier (1829), Hewitt, as reviewer for the *Minerva*, admiring the "richness and smoothness of Thomas Moore and the grandeur of Byron," took occasion to assail the uneven and irregular rhythm of the comparatively unknown poet, whom with all his "brain cudgelling" he could not compel himself to understand, "line by line, or the sum total."

The result of the contest, added to previous insults, was a little too much for the moody Poe. The next time he met Hewitt on the street, he accused him of using underhand methods as editor of the *Visitor* to win the prize. Words resulted in blows, but they

were separated before either damaged the other materially. Hewitt never forgave Poe for becoming famous; they parted as friends outwardly, but in "Shadows on the Wall," he expressed his real opinion:

Poe was not the poet he was supposed to be; he added but little to the literary reputation of our country. His "Raven" to be sure, gained him vast renown (particularly after he had rested in the grave for nearly 26 years!) but the idea was not original—it was taken from the old English poets. The "Manuscript Found in a Bottle," a composition which won several prizes, was only a new version of the "Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner."

For many years tributes to Poe have called forth reminders of the contest from Hewitt's admirers. When the University of Virginia unveiled the Poe monument, a correspondent of the New York *Herald* asked if it would not be well "to recognize the talents of one who was contemporary with Poe, and whose poetic genius won the prize over the very poem, the 'Coliseum,' quoted in the editorial column of the New York *Herald* of October 2nd?" The underrated genius complex went to extremes among Hewitt's adherents; there was even a tradition that he had sold ten of his song manuscripts to Stephen Foster, one of them the "Old Folks at Home"!

In 1840 Hewitt moved to Washington, where he established and edited a paper called the *Capitol*. Five years later he went to Norfolk, and then returned to Baltimore in 1847. Shortly afterwards he was offered a position as music teacher at the Chesapeake Female College in Hampton, Va. He stayed there nine years. During this time his wife died.

When John Brown's raid made it apparent that northern Virginia would be an active scene of possible future hostilities between North and South, Hewitt left Hampton for Chambersburg and later went to Richmond. When Virginia seceded from the Union he offered his services to the Confederacy, but he was then over sixty, and was not accepted for active military service. Because of his West Point training, Jefferson Davis appointed him to the thankless task of drill-master of raw recruits.

In 1863 he went to Savannah, Georgia, and married a former pupil, Mary Alethea Smith. Four more children were subsequently added to the family. After the War he returned to Baltimore, and stayed there until his death in 1890. He became one of the characters of the city, and when he died at the age of eighty-nine, Baltimore felt that it had lost one of its links with

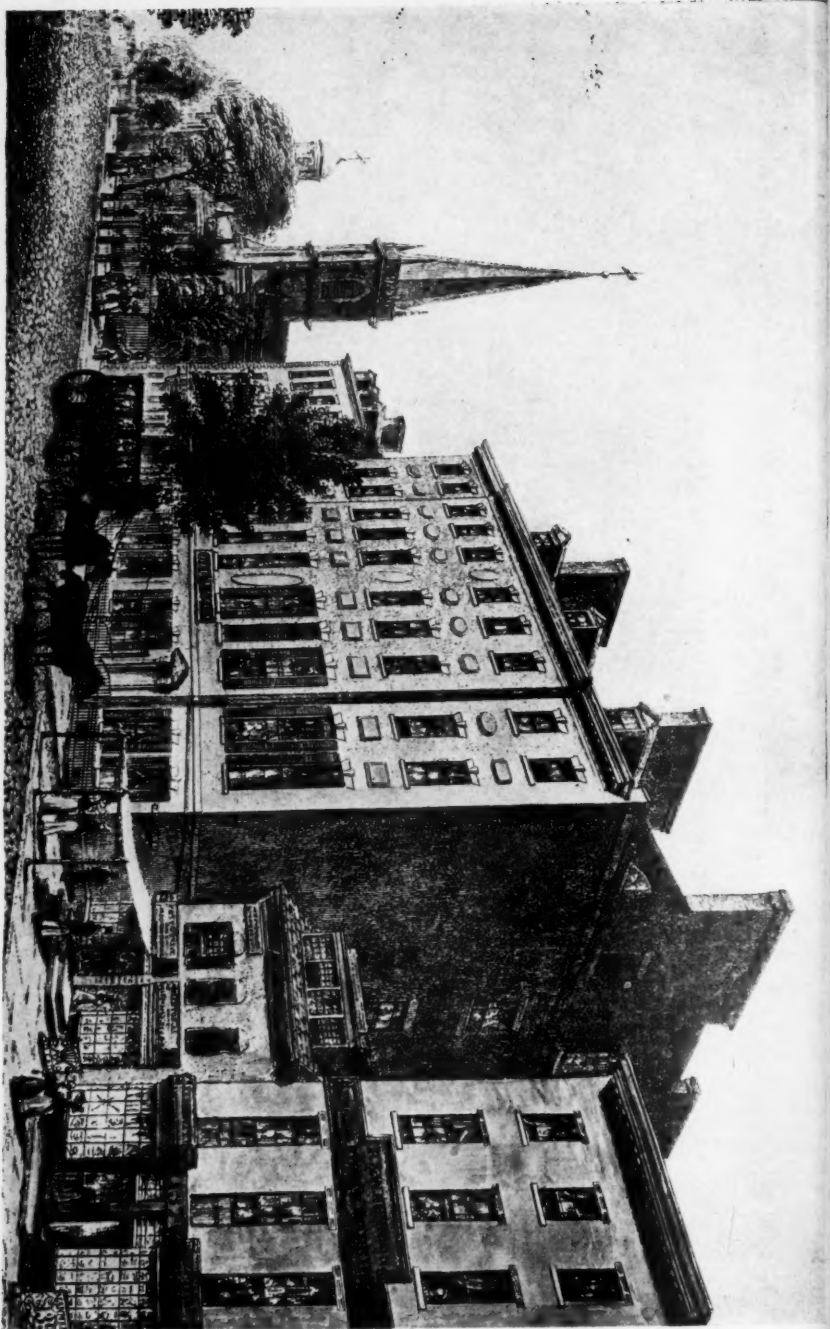
J. HEWITT.

NEW YORK.

James Hewitt's Setting of the Star-Spangled Banner.

From the 1940s to the 1960s, the word "disability" was used very rarely and PEACE says the word's negative history means the group's dual battle against and government is a solemn duty to protect the rights of disabled people.

The concept was simple, when our nation is at peace. And this is our motto: "PEACE TO OUR TRUTH". And the other charged leaders in strength with words. Over the head of the fire and the heart of the heart.



The City Hotel, New York, about 1830. Many of New York's Concerts were held here. At the right,
No. 137, is James L. Hewitt's Music Store, and Nunn's Pianoforte Warehouse

the past. He had seen Fulton's first steamboat on the Hudson, he was present when the first dispatch was sent over Morse's telegraph line between Baltimore and Washington, and he was a passenger on the first train of cars that was pulled out of Baltimore by a locomotive.

John Hill Hewitt composed over three hundred songs. "The Minstrel's Return from the War" brought him a reputation early in life. This was followed by another song, which his brother James published and had the foresight (or was it hindsight?) to copyright. This was "The Knight of the Raven Black Plume," agreeable both in words and music. The opening phrase is akin to Mendelssohn's "On Wings of Song," undoubtedly a mere coincidence, as Hewitt could hardly have been familiar with Mendelssohn's song at the time. "On Wings of Song" was probably written in 1834; Hewitt's song was published before 1835. Others of his songs were "The Mountain Bugle," "Our Native Land," "All Quiet Along the Potomac," "Rock Me to Sleep, Mother," and "Where the Sweet Magnolia Blooms." "Take Me Home to the Sunny South" expressed Southern sentiment after the War.

Although his greatest success was in a narrative type of ballad, Hewitt's oratorio, "Jephtha," was given successfully in Washington, Georgetown, Norfolk and Baltimore. When it was presented at the Broadway Tabernacle in New York with a chorus of 200 and an orchestra of 50, it was roughly handled by the critics. Hewitt also published several cantatas:—"Flora's Festival," "The Fairy Bridal," "The Revellers," and "The Musical Enthusiasts." His operas were "Rip Van Winkle," "The Vivandière," "The Prisoner of Monterey," and "The Artist's Wife."

In 1838 N. Hickman of Baltimore published a volume of Hewitt's miscellaneous poems. Many of them possess true imagery and show genuine talent. "Shadows on the Wall" (1877) contains many of his later poems. His connections with theatrical entertainments led him to write plays, several of which were produced:—"Washington," "The Scouts," "The Jayhawker," "The Marquis in Petticoats," "The Log Hut" and "Plains of Manassas."

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John Hewitt's oldest son was Horatio Dowes Hewitt, who became a musician, a composer and a music critic. He spent most of his life in Baltimore, and also lived in New Orleans and St.

Louis, owning music stores in both cities. He composed a comic opera and many songs that achieved success. He survived his father by only four years, and died in Baltimore in 1894. One of his daughters, Carrie W. Hewitt, is a Baltimore music teacher.

Of the other sons of the original James Hewitt, James Lang Hewitt, born in 1807, spent his life in the music publishing business founded by his father. This younger James first appeared as a publisher on his own account when he joined J. A. Dickson at 34 Market Street, Boston, in 1825. After his father's death he moved back to New York, and became one of the prominent dealers and publishers of the city until the late '40's. For many years his store at 137 Broadway, next to the City Hotel, where so many concerts were given, was a gathering place for musicians. He died in 1853.

The third son of James Hewitt, Horatio Nelson Hewitt, continued the music business in Boston for a number of years, and later moved to New York. The youngest son, George Washington Hewitt was trained as a musician, and, after a disastrous publishing venture in Philadelphia, settled in Burlington, N. J., as a teacher. He was a prolific composer, and his salon pieces were much in demand. His son, Hobart Doane Hewitt, born in 1852, is still living in Burlington as a teacher of violin and piano. At one time associated with the Presser firm in Philadelphia, he has published many compositions of his own.

Both of James Hewitt's daughters were musicians. Sophia Henriette, the elder, married Louis Ostinelli, the violinist who belonged to the group that formed a Philharmonic Society with Gottlieb Graupner in Boston. Her daughter, Eliza Ostinelli, became a well-known opera singer after studying at the Conservatory at Naples. At one time she was one of the prominent prima donnas of Europe. She married the Italian Count Biscaccianti, a 'cellist who later deserted her and took with him her grandfather's Amati 'cello.

Sophia Hewitt was organist of the Boston Handel and Haydn Society from 1820 to 1829. She had been brought before the public as a pianist when she was only seven years old, in New York. She also sang, and appeared occasionally at the New York concerts of the Euterpean Society. Parker's *Euterpiad* (1822) gave the following estimate of her performance on the piano:

Her playing is plain, sensible, and that of a gentlewoman; she neither takes by storm, nor by surprise, but she generally wins upon the understanding, while the ear, though it never fills the other senses with ecstasy [*sic*] drinks in full satisfaction.

She died in Portland, Maine, in 1846. Her younger sister, Eliza, never married, but kept to the family tradition by being a music teacher, first in Boston, then in Burlington, where she lived with her brother George.

These are the principal musical members of the Hewitt family, who have been active in our musical life for nearly one hundred and forty years. Their accomplishments have by no means proved immortal; one seldom hears of them now-a-days. Yet compared with other musicians of their time, they assume an entirely different and much greater importance. In their day they ranked with the most prominent of our musical personalities.

SOME EARLY JEWISH MUSICIANS

By PAUL NETTL

IT is indeed a most remarkable phenomenon that a whole series of the names and works of Jewish composers of the Italian Renaissance has been handed down to us, whereas neither in Italy nor in any other European country before or after that period—down to the nineteenth century—did the Jews exert a really noteworthy influence upon the evolution of music; until, together with the Jewish emancipation, the great stream of Jewish musical culture actively affected musical development in general. The reason for this phenomenon is to be sought in the racial character of the Italians, who do not, in a spirit at all like that of the Northerners, regard their Jewish neighbors as a foreign body, but rather recognize them, so much resembling themselves in character and appearance, as an integral part of their nationality. This was more especially in evidence during the Renaissance period, when the Jews were permitted to develop along many other lines in the sciences, the arts, and public affairs; a period when prejudice was systematically relegated to the background, when personality was most highly valued and slothful mentality not at all, and humanity was held up as the law for all actions.

In the Italy of the Renaissance anti-Semitism did not assume such acrimonious forms as, for example, in Germany; this can be verified by a comparison between the German and Italian Jewish satires of that period. The drastic style of German pamphleteers like Georg Liebe, Eduard Fuchs, *et al.*, in handling the Jews, is apparently quite unusual in Italy. In the literature of Italian vocal music—the polyphonic madrigal, the villotta, and particularly the *mascherata*—the Jew is often the object of more or less harmless witticisms. In *Amfiparnasso*, the famous madrigal-opera of Orazio Vecchi, the Jewish ritual song is made fun of, likewise in an “Ebraica” among the villotte of Azzajuolo (publ. 1569), which in this collection stands, significantly, beside a “Tedesca” and a “Bergamasca”; for the Germans and Bergamasques were, as we know, frequently travestied. In Adriano Banchieri’s “Barca di Vénetia” (1605) two comical “*entrellocutori di barca*,” Bethel and Samuel Hebrei, are introduced; in the three-part canzonette of the same composer we find a “*Mascherata di Hebrei*”; and

Banchieri too, who seems to have a partiality for the Jewish element, publishes in his "Pazzia senile" (1598) the satirical song "Sinagoga di Hebrei : Tic tac tic," which is meant for a mimicry of Jewish ritual song similar to the gibberish in the *Amfiparnasso*. Such musical caricatures of Hebraism are numerous found in the vocal literature of the Renaissance; they are always held within bounds and usually stress the comic element, but are never so hateful as the German satires of the Jews.

It would appear more important, however, to call attention to the fact that the Jews themselves took an active part in the musical life of the period. But this matter has not yet been sufficiently elucidated; it is more than probable that Jewish historical researchers will succeed in throwing light upon it.

Of some of these Jewish musicians only the names are still extant; we may mention Jacopo Sansecondo and Giovanni Maria, both of whom were employed at the court of Pope Leo X, besides which the former is said to have been the model for Rafael's Apollo of Parnassus, while the latter was the original of Sebastiano del Piombo's "Violin-player." Others have left us not only their names, but works, although these compositions have not received the attention that is their due. Allegro Porta in 1625 dedicated a volume of madrigals to Emperor Ferdinand II, and had previously dedicated to Count Porzia, chamberlain to the Elector of Bavaria, a collection of madrigals entitled "Nuove Musiche" after the celebrated work by Caccini.

While it appears that Jewish musicians were scattered throughout Italy, they were especially enlisted by the court of the Gonzagas in Mantua, who showed a marked predilection for Jewish artists. The harpist Abramo dall' Arpa Ebreo was there, and also his nephew Abramino dall' Arpa, an actor and musician. Joacchino Massarano was a lutenist, sopranist and ballet-master, and arranged the court festivals at Mantua and Ferrara. Also engaged at Mantua was the Jewish musician Davidde da Cività; the parts of a three-part madrigal by him are in the State Library of Berlin.

Most important among all these Mantuan musicians, however, was Salomone Rossi, whom records show to have been at the court of the Gonzagas from 1587 to 1630. His sister, Madama Europa, was a fêted vocalist; she was in the cast at the première of Monteverdi's famous opera *Arianna*, and was in Mantua together with the world-renowned "Bella Adriana," sister of the Neapolitan poet Basilo (who, by the way, was attached to the Mantuan court during that glorious period when men like Monteverdi and Rossi held sway; this was after he had fallen desperately in love with a

beautiful Jewess on the isle of Crete). The son of Madama Europa, Anselmo Rossi, was likewise a musician, and is represented by a motet in a collection of motets published in Mantua, 1618. In Mantua there was in 1575 a troupe of actors founded by the Jew, Leone de Sommi. Like Salomone Rossi, he was permitted to attend court and appear on the street without the degrading label denoting the Jew. Furthermore, mention is made in a Mantuan record of the Hebrew Simone Basilea, who as the sole actor-speaker produced comedies written for several speaking parts.

In contrast with other Jewish musicians, Salomone Rossi held fast to his religious faith, and wrote a series of compositions for the synagogue which were collected and published in 1630. With these was laid the foundation for the vocal ritual of the synagogue in all Italy. This first authoritative volume of Jewish temple-song, printed by Bragadini in Venice and now extremely rare, has been published in a new edition by the Parisian chief cantor Naumbourg in coöperation with Vincent d'Indy. The work has an introduction by the celebrated Jewish scholar and poet Jehuda da Modena, whose son (so the preface states), a youth of twenty-one and gifted with a great musical talent, was murdered by his own co-religionists. Moreover, Ariele da Modena had also studied singing and instrument-playing, as he himself writes in his autobiography.

Rossi's compositions for the synagogue, written in Palestrina-style, are peculiarly euphonious, as are his numerous madrigals on Italian texts. Rossi, like Sulzer, Lewandowski, *et al.*, was numbered among those who sought to graft the contemporary music of their environment artificially upon the Jewish ritual. Still, his work bears the hallmark of genius, and his larger compositions are assured abiding fame. In any event it is remarkable that Rossi, in contrast with Jewish composers of later date, was by no means a musical innovator, let alone a revolutionary. He had no part in the endeavors of Florentine innovators like Peri, Caccini and Gagliano, although he functioned side by side with Monteverdi, that firebrand of the Renaissance, at the Mantuan court. Only in the department of instrumental music was he in the vanguard of his period, being one of the first to transfer the new monodic style to instrumental works. It is, therefore, no easy matter to express the specifically Jewish element in his music by a formula. As for dramatic music, Rossi apparently had no particular taste for it, and participated only in the composition of a religious drama, "Maddalena," which, according to the title, was set to music by

the most excellent musicians of that day, among them being Monteverdi. Whether influenced by religious motives or a distaste for the dramatic style, and therefore lending only unwilling aid to the work, Rossi's sole contribution was a short number, a three-part Balletto for voices and three violins—an almost primitive piece in *mascherata*-style.

Now, it is extremely interesting to note how the Jews began to play a certain rôle in other spheres, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in the music of their Christian environment. For instance, I recently found in the records of the Vienna *Obersthofmeisteramt* the petition of a Jewish musician from Frankfort, Samuel Creton, about the year 1660, wherein he prays Emperor Leopold I, in view of the wrongs done him by his Jewish relatives because of his baptism, for a special recompense. Kapellmeister Bertali very warmly supported this petition, but Creton's name speedily disappeared from the records.

The Jewish orchestra in Prague really played a quite exceptional part in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; in this connection I take the liberty of calling attention to my essays on "*Alte jüdische Spielleute und Musiker*" ("Ancient Jewish Musicians and Composers") and "*Musikbarock in Böhmen und Mähren*" ("The Baroque Period in Bohemia and Moravia"), both based on original records. Between Jewish and Christian musicians an aggressive campaign of competition soon set in. At all events, the Christian players point out that the Jews were taking away their bread; for it seems that Christians preferred to employ them at all festivities and dances. But purely professional arguments were also adduced against the artistic activities of the Jews. It was asserted in their disparagement that "they do not keep time and rhythm, put the music out of joint, and by their irreverence bring the noble art into disrespect." Now, how can it be explained that these musicians of Prague, accused of playing so wretchedly, were none the less in such high favor? Even in the eighteenth century the Jewish musicians enjoyed marked partiality in Bohemia. In the case of one Loebel, a blind Jew who was playing towards 1785 with a band of musicians in Bohemia, Georg Bends relates that he drew a good tone from his violin and himself composed his "*Stücke*" (pieces), which were executed very well, though wildly. Some of them ranged upward to high *a*, and nevertheless he brought them out very cleanly and true to pitch. It seems highly probable that this Jewish music was radically different from that of the Christians in view of German caricatures still extant relating to Jewish strolling players. I recall a Jewish

dance found in Hans Neusiedler's "Lautenbuch" of the year 1544. "It must be struck off with a right nimble hand, else 'twill not sound well," says the preface to this piece *à la* Beckmesser, swarming with whole-tone steps, augmented intervals, and unpermitted progressions. While this dance is to be regarded merely as a caricature one can learn a great deal from it concerning the nature of the music made by the early Jewish players.

Berl, in his book on "Das Judentum in der Musik" ("The Role of the Jews in Music"), differentiates oriental from occidental music by designating them as linear and harmonic art, respectively; or—in still broader conception—as temporal art and spatial art. The Jew (so he says), a man of an eminently temporal frame of mind, is a melodist and only a melodist, as exemplified by the Jewish musicians Meyerbeer, Mendelssohn, Bizet (?), Offenbach, Goldmark, Mahler, or the at least anti-harmonist Schönberg.

Even if Berl's theory is not wholly conclusive (and there is no question that Schönberg's atonality derives from harmony, not from melody) he has, perhaps, with this accentuation of the linear element in Jewish music, offered a valuable suggestion. Certain it is, that music, as the sphere of mentality lying deepest in our subconsciousness, most immediately establishes our contact, so to speak, with the remote ancestral past. Just as the fully assimilated Jew even after generations betrays his origin in one way or another by speech, gesture, glance or mental cast, similarly, in the music of that "most German" of composers, Mendelssohn, or of the "most French" of composers, Offenbach, or of any of the "most Viennese" operetta composers, a sensitive listener can instantly detect the Jewish tinge. But what is it? It may be a something in the melody that strikes us, who are still living in the harmony of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as in some way unworthy of art. And as to-day one faction violently rejects Mendelssohn, Meyerbeer, Offenbach, Mahler, while another lauds them to the skies, so it was in all probability with those old Jewish musicians of the seventeenth century. Only it seems likely that the Jewish "linear" element was much more strongly stressed, because the assimilation was then younger by three actively influential centuries.

And now, for the further elucidation of this "linear" element, I offer a conjecture suggested by the essay "Über vergleichendakustische und musikpsychologische Untersuchungen" ("Researches in Comparative Acoustics and Musical Psychology"), by E. M. von Hornbostel in the *Beiträge zur Akustik und Musikwissenschaft* published by C. Stumpf. The author writes:

Among various primitive peoples it has been observed that in their singing of a simple melody they take no pains to sing exactly pure intervals, but are satisfied with approximate ones. In their monodic music one meets with a vast number of intervals which, measured exactly, fall between two intervals of our tonal system; moreover, such intervals are not simply the fortuitous productions of untrained singers, but of regular occurrence in otherwise consistent intonation.

In other songs (he says) the intonation changes during the course of the melody, but in a well-regulated manner; the pitch rises constantly, the melodic curve continually changing its level, as it were; or the pitch of one melodic principal tone is held fast throughout the entire song, while the tone-steps diverging from or converging toward this principal tone become wider (or narrower) in particular passages of the melody. Or, in the different repetitions of "one and the same" melodic passage, intervals occur that differ widely, so that for our ears the sense of the passage is totally altered.

We know that in the earliest Christian churchly songs, and in the songs of the Jewish synagogue, the "principle of variation" is observable; in the "neumes," that ancient notation of Oriental origin, we find the same phenomenon, namely, the fixation of only the general direction of the melodic leading. (Not until the advent of mensural music and the introduction of polyphony had the pitch to be exactly fixed.) In old Jewish notation the evolution of the not definitely fixed melodic formulas takes a similar course. Rising and falling inflections in speech, the guttural intonations peculiar to the Orient in general, which are incapable of fixation, and a wealth of variation, are found among all peoples whose music is monophonic.

Hence, among those races whose music is dependent on speech, with its unstable tonal intervals, the pure "linear" element in music would probably be retained the longest. To this species belongs the "distance-music" of certain peoples like the Javanese and Siamese, who still have no idea of the harmonic principles derived from the overtones. And the experience of the Jews was probably similar to that of the peoples mentioned by Hornbostel.

This would explain why, in orientalized Spain, the variation-forms were developed, and why Orientals, and peoples akin to them, such as Spaniards, Jews, Slavs and southerners, brought forth on the whole reproductive rather than productive artists. (Production, in the occidental sense, demands originality and stability in the work of art.) Furthermore, why the Spaniards, Jews and Slavs (with the exception of the Czechs under Germanic

influences) show a preference for minor melody, *i.e.*, for music not controlled by the overtones.

And now we return to our old Jewish musicians of Prague, of whom we are willing to believe that they not only made "a trifle free with the melody," but likewise treated the rhythm (in itself a resultant of European harmony) most irrationally. And having begun our remarks by speaking of the Jewish musicians of the Italian Renaissance, we may be allowed to close with the statement that the highly cultivated Italy of that period had assimilated the Jews far more intimately than Germany, where the Jews, in their enforced isolation, could preserve their racial peculiarities far longer in fuller intensity.

(Translated by Theodore Baker.)

THE SONGS OF SIDNEY HOMER

By HARRY COLIN THORPE

PRELUDE

HAD the art of Sidney Homer been less than incorruptibly honest he would never have written "A Banjo Song." Instead, he would have heeded the cowardly counsel to "abstain from all appearance of evil," sternly shutting out of his heart the crisp rhythm of spanking palms and patting leather that was singing there; for, of course, among contemporary musicians of elevated brow the one evil is the possession of a heart, especially a heart that understands, and sometimes beats in unison with that of lowly and uncultured folk. With these cultish gentlemen, the pinna is always inclined eastward, straining eagerly across the Atlantic to catch the echoes from Paris or Vienna, and just as soon as the trend of atonality is evident, they rush to their staves or keyboards to join the newest "modern movement." But Mr. Homer, like Cyrano de Bergerac, "does not follow": he is perfectly content to occupy his own skin, artistically speaking, accepting his own emotions for better or for worse as the sole source of his inspiration.

Because he has written several songs of rather general appeal, however, one should not too hastily conclude that the muse of Mr. Homer finds its most congenial habitat on Main Street; and most emphatically one should not suppose that Mr. Homer and Mrs. Bond are musical cousins. On the contrary, Sidney Homer is wholly at home in the attenuated atmosphere of the artists' heaven as well as on the solid, brown earth of the average man. (We shall find him tall, and a long leaper!) My intention is not to stress the fact that Mr. Homer can and does write songs with a "folksy" feeling but to emphasize the psychological integrity of the composer—an integrity which leads him to write what he feels regardless of comment and consequences—for this daring sincerity is an outstanding characteristic of his art.

Although one admires the resolute determination of an artist to be himself at all costs, it is an unfortunate fact that in some cases the costs are rather high. A composer, for instance, may produce a "best seller," which largely overshadows works that are more nearly representative; and if he once achieves "popularity"

it is likely that his serious colleagues will accept the indictment and not trouble themselves to investigate further. This has been, in some degree, the case with Sidney Homer, although many of his more dignified songs have received marked recognition in the most cultivated musical circles. Despite this fact, the main body of his work is not well known; and it is quite certain to my mind that the unique raciness inherent in the most Homeric songs has never been fully sensed and appreciated.

It would be easy to point out the unusual melodic and harmonic usages of this composer, indicating them as the source of his strongly original tang; but a mere structural analysis will no more yield the secret of personality in music than dissection of the human body will disclose the mystery of life and consciousness. In the field of music it seems to me that the typical "analysis," except to students of construction, is devastating to real interest. Too much of the writing about music is nothing but bookkeeping—entries of quantities, varieties, specifications—as, twenty measures in the key of the dominant, four modulations to the subdominant, two deceptive cadences. What choking dust this is! Why try to record in words what has been better done in notes by the composer? Rather let us be told what the music means, what value it has (if any), where it links up with life, what it reveals of human psychology or of artistic convictions, opinions and prejudices. Give us the living flesh and blood—not a desiccated skeleton!

The key to the Homer idiom, then, will be found in the character, temperament and disposition, in the attractions and repulsions, the habits and attitudes of the man rather than in the materials and methods of the composer. And since a creator reveals himself in his creations, it is likely that, as we study the songs of Sidney Homer, the self of their author will emerge before us, itself the final and authentic explication of his art.

I

The waggish Fra Elbertus once parodied an old adage by writing, "A woman is known by the husband she keeps"; if I were permitted to attempt another parody, which would be pertinent to our present interest, I should say, "A composer is known by the poems he sets." Anyone who makes such a statement will certainly be accused of trifling with truth, a charge which I admit to be perfectly just; for it is quite obvious that many poor composers have chosen to defile beautiful poetry, while some excellent

composers have lent their art to poetic piffle. But in the main a composer's taste, his outlook and even his ability will be indicated pretty surely by the verses he selects for musical setting.

When one approaches the Homer songs from this point of view, one's immediate reactions are astonishment and confusion. Here side by side lie "The Eternal Goodness" and "Casey at the Bat"; "Home they Brought her Warrior Dead" and "Old Watt and the Rabbits"; "My Star" and "An Idaho Ball"; "The Cos-sack," an ancient Slavic poem, and the contemporary "General William Booth Enters into Heaven."

What can such an incongruous aggregation of poems mean? How can one reconcile the taste which chooses to set such a poem as "The Sick Rose," by William Blake, with that which elects such doggerel as "Christmas Chimes"? Into my mind comes uninvited an echo from some banal verses read many years ago in "Judge" or "Life," but (fortunately for all *gentle* readers) I can recall only the last few lines of this poetic product. They were something like this:

"The Frenchman loves his native wine
Because it gives him dizziness.
The American has no choice at all,
So he drinks the whole d—— business."

Be that as it may, it is certain that instead of having "no choice at all" and therefore setting anything and everything that comes his way, Mr. Homer's choices are very definite and characteristic.

Perhaps the meaning of this catholic taste is embodied in Whitman's line, "I resist anything better than my own diversity"; like the good gray poet, the composer has accepted himself *in toto*, recognizing the fluid character of that composite thing called personality. He sees that the psyche is not a god with two faces only, but a multi-visaged being; he realizes that the gay mood is Homer, the devout mood is Homer, the sophisticated mood is Homer, the passionate mood is Homer, the aspiring mood is Homer. With Emerson he "writes upon the lintels of the door-post, 'whim,'" giving himself over to the spontaneous uprush of impressions and ideas, finding himself whole while multifarious; one, yet many.

II

Even in the early Op. 5, settings of four old Slavic poems, we find indisputable proof that whatever else he may be, Mr. Homer is not a monger of music-hall ballads, as some would have us believe. On the contrary we perceive the work of an artist—

r050
v.17

strong and sincere, quick of perception, sure of touch—displaying already the clearly etched features of an individual musical physiognomy. The rugged masculinity, the forthrightness, the integrity that are Homer stand revealed in the first measure of the first song.

Allegro $\text{♩} = 120$
mit sügelloser Hingebung
with reckless abandon

poco rit.

Und es saust und es braust und es reg - net drau - ssen!
 And it roars and it pours, and the storm is rag - ing!

fzfp fp fp fp fp fp poco rit.

molto legato il basso

It is clear that the choice of these poems evidences an attraction toward the strength, directness and purity of folk-poetry—an attraction which later found expression in the Bandanna Ballads, Songs of the Old South, and Cheerful Songs. Certainly the second and third songs of this group, "The Lost Shepherds" and "The Scribe" are treated *im Volkston*, and very successfully, one might add. The latter song in particular achieves real naïveté.

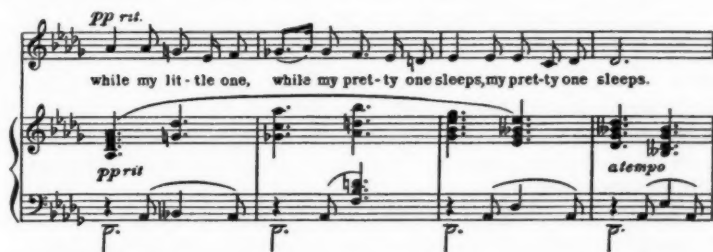
Enough has been said already to found a suspicion that Mr. Homer has a hankering for the dramatic, so it is not surprising to find him making music for the tense and bitter poem, "The Youth's Departure to the War"—music that clothes the words of the mother in hateful and vixenish phrases and lends to the son's utterances a stern and noble dignity. Reaching clear through from these early songs to his latest published work, "The Everlasting Mercy," we find this epic and objective tendency, an extraordinary thing in this subjective and egocentric age of ours. This objectivity and strength appear even in his lyric moods, where lachrymose romanticism is as alien as the sterile celebrations of mad modernists. Without loss of warmth and conviction, Mr. Homer achieves a large and detached attitude, which is a real distinction.

III

An English-speaking song-composer whose creative activities began in the last quarter of the nineteenth century could not have ignored the poetry of Tennyson, any more than a German com-

poser of twenty-five years earlier could have overlooked the lyrics of Heine. And it is just as unlikely that a dweller in Boston town would fail to make a setting for the great Victorian's famous and popular "Crossing the Bar." But the transition from early Slavic to late Victorian poetry was not particularly advantageous to the style of Sidney Homer. "Break, break, break" and "Crossing the Bar," which make up his Op. 6, represent a lapse from the plane of the earlier songs; the craftsmanship is less sure, the emotion less firmly sustained, the aim less clearly apparent.

But in "Sweet and Low," the first song of Op. 7, the composer reestablishes his standing, not by a return to the heroic mood of the Slavic songs, but by displaying an element of style as yet unheard—charm. Here we meet Mr. Homer in a relaxed mood—here anticipate some of the delightful moments of delicate and ingratiating fancy that are by no means uncommon in his work.



Contrasting vividly with the gentle, swaying rhythm and facile harmonic play of the foregoing song, the next of the Tennyson songs, "Thy voice is heard," opens with martial swing and the unchanging, ominous sonority of rolling drums. Equally strong are the closing measures, embodying a triumphant fanfare from brazen trumpet throats. Other songs of this group (all Tennyson poems) are the lamenting "Home they brought her warrior dead"; whimsical settings of "The City Child" and "Minnie and Winnie"; and "Enid's Song," appropriately cast in the form of a spinning ditty.

IV

As a musical craftsman Mr. Homer obeys the old injunction to "let not thy right hand know what thy left hand doeth," which is perhaps a poor way of saying that he makes use of methods as different as pain and pleasure. Look for a moment at "A Lake and a Fairy Boat," belonging to the three Hood songs of Op. 10;

the vocal part limns a distinct melodic pattern of rather organic character, although it is not wholly independent of its harmonic basis. But in its companion-piece, "It was the time of Roses," we have an utter absence of melody in an independent sense, for here the composer merely assigns to the voice that tone of the harmonic structure which seems most suitable.

This method lends itself conveniently to composers who would exploit the dramatic possibilities of a poem, and Mr. Homer has used it in setting the three Browning poems—"My Star," "Prospect" and "A Woman's Last Word," of Op. 12. These poems, like most of Browning's, are not particularly evocative of melody, so it is no wonder that they have not awakened the lyricism of Mr. Homer. Such being the case, one does not expect to find in these pieces the feeling of flow which we have come to regard as inherent in song. These ranks of tonal columns, unconnected by a horizontal line, are properly musical declamations, not songs at all.

The worst faults of this method are the loss of coherence, from lack of an organized tune, and monotony, due to absence of passing tones. Its obvious advantages are flexibility in the handling of words and phrases and great freedom in the use of color. Of course, it is true that Mr. Homer, by using a flowing, sequential figure in the piano score of "My Star" secures a certain coherence without other aid.

In a later setting of Browning's "There's heaven above" (Op. 21) he strikes a happy balance, which reconciles these two methods, making the "lion and the lamb lie down together." This song shows decided growth in the ability to set poetry that embodies intellectual or spiritual, rather than erotic passion. The persistently plodding bass, the undaunted upward climb of the chord masses to the level of ecstasy, the broad sweep and swing of the zealot's assertion "for I intend to get to God"—all these bespeak a noteworthy gain over the early Browning songs.

V

The early Slavic poems drew from Mr. Homer settings that are virile, straightforward and sincere—true and powerful interpretations of mood and situation. The Tennyson songs presented new problems, which the artist attacked and solved with various degrees of success. Later, in dealing with the austere Browning and the inconsequential Hood, he must reshape his methods, struggling to soften and remold their musically ungracious lines. These songs, as well as "Daybreak" (Op. 11) and "A Poor Man's

Song" (Op. 13), while they are by no means the work of an inexperienced hand, must nevertheless be regarded as the necessary prelude to full and complete self-realization as an artist.

But with the setting of Oliver Wendell Holmes' "The Last Leaf" (Op. 14) there emerges the full-grown musical personality; here for the first time we see not only the features but the form of the artist—not only the expression of the eyes but the posture and attitude of the body. Strong, simple, kind, yet in deadly earnest, warm but neither sentimental nor sensuous, large-souled, compassionate—one cannot escape the inevitable conviction that here stands a musical Lincoln.

ff with emotion *allarg.*

And if I should live to be the last leaf up-on the tree In the spring, Let them

ff *allarg.*

Coda ad libitum

smile as I do now, At the old for-sak-en bough Where I cling.

ff *etc.*

Compare this excerpt with anything written previously and its overreaching stature will be apparent; compare it with any cutting from subsequent songs and it will reveal, at least in essence, all the traits that are most characteristic.

In nature like Homer's there is not the usual duality of man and artist; there is integrity, the man and the artist being one. Quite naturally, the passions and convictions of the man become the material of the artist; the art is always a very personal expression.

The strong humanitarianism of Mr. Homer, for instance, comes forth again and again in his powerfully felt settings of such poems as "To Russia" (Op. 17), "How's my Boy" (Op. 17), "The Fiddler of Dooney" (Op. 20), "The Song of the Shirt" (Op. 25), "The Pauper's Drive" (Op. 18), "The Poor Man's Song" (Op. 13)—titles which would waken little stir in the breast of a mere aesthete, preoccupied with the shibboleths of his cult. But Homer is not self-bound, nation-bound, creed-bound or cult-bound; he can say with Whitman, "My spirit has passed in compassion . . . around the whole earth."

In a period when intense individualism and "self-expression" seem to key the artist's mood, the universality of Homer's feeling is the more remarkable. His consciousness is broad enough to appreciate the plight of Russia's persecuted Jew; the weariness of the sweatshop worker whose tired fingers stitch the "Song of the Shirt"; the pathos of the unknown pauper's burial in unhallowed ground; the touching faith of the fiddler of Dooney who believes that his chances with Saint Peter equal those of his priestly brother and cousin; the intense, suffocating, unreasoning grief of the widow whose sailor son went down in the "Jolly Briton"—all these and more are profoundly realized in the depths of the composer's psyche and thence projected through the medium of music.

"How's my Boy" is one of the most powerful and original songs ever written by an American, wrought in a style so individual as to make all comparison not only odious, but impossible. In this song his musical character comes to an intense focus—his genius flowers in its strange, almost primitive, virility.



Not for an instant does the composer of "How's my Boy" "caress his material" as I believe Renoir said the artist always does; rather he commands his materials as a master his slave, making the stubborn buckram of modal harmony accept and conform to his

purposes as easily as Wagner fashioned his silken chromatics. Strong and bitter is the Homer harmony; here is no ripened roast drowned in rich gravies, no snowy bread, no sweet, luscious fruits, no milk, no honey—but a meal of herbs and black bread, wholesome, nourishing, and, to unjaded palates, satisfying.

INTERLUDE

Sidney Homer was born in Boston on December 9, 1864. Among his ancestors, resident there for generations, was the well-known amateur singer, Daniel Rea, who is credited with the first introduction of Handel arias into this country; but with this exception the art of music was a foreign province to the Homers. Young Sidney himself knew nothing of music in childhood save what he gleaned from his sister, who was a student of piano playing; his early passions were English poetry and the works of Dickens and Thackeray. Out of his extensive reading sprang a desire to visit London, the home of so many of his idols, and at the age of sixteen he was able to realize this cherished dream.

Among those in the metropolis who became friendly with the young American was a Mr. Green, music-critic of the London Daily News, who discerned the budding gift and urged him to study music, recommending the Leipsic Conservatory, of which he was himself a graduate. Acting upon this advice immediately, the Boston youth hurled himself into a musical atmosphere created largely by the Gewandhaus Orchestra under Reinecke, the opera under Anton Seidl, and the choir of the Thomaskirche, where Bach was performed regularly.

Returning to Boston white-hot with enthusiasm, it did not take him long to win his parents to the (at that time) unheard-of project of serious music study, so the following season he returned to Leipsic with full parental support and encouragement. But before the year was out, hard work had brought on an attack of shingles which made it necessary for him temporarily to abandon his studies. He returned to his home in Boston where he remained for more than a year, spending the time in studying poetry, essays and philosophy.

The following winter he again took up his musical studies, this time with George W. Chadwick, who, after instructing his pupil in organ and composition for a year, sent him to Rheinberger at the Royal School of Music in Munich, under whose guidance he remained for three years. Plans for further study were abandoned

because of his father's death. The erstwhile student now became a teacher of harmony and counterpoint in his home city, carrying on the work for a period of eight years, during which his classes flourished and became well known.

Near the end of this period Miss Louise Beatty, of Philadelphia, entered the Homer classes and about two years later became Louise Homer. After the birth of their first child the Homers embarked for Paris, where Mrs. Homer was to continue her vocal studies. While Mrs. Homer was studying, and developing the career which has made her name familiar to every American, her husband, released from pedagogic labors, began the creative work which he still continues. Louise Homer has introduced many of her husband's songs to the public, and through her complete understanding of his ideals and aims, as well as by the quality of her voice and art, has done much to acquaint the public with his work.

VI

Serious as is the usual tenor of Mr. Homer's work, he has his moments of relaxation; the heroic, the tragic, the pathetic are not his only preoccupation, for he has a keen appreciation of life in its tender, innocent and humorous aspects as well. It is more than likely that there is a vital relation between some of his lighter fancies and the fact that he is father to six! Be that as it may, the children's songs reveal a delightful side of Mr. Homer's art.

The lyrics from Christina Rossetti's "Sing-Song" (Op. 19) are the charming verses for which Mr. Homer has created musical settings that enshrine so many of childhood's moods and fancies. In these little pieces he has captured the spirit exhaled by the Rossetti rhymes and intensified it musically.

A tender beauty, touched with wistfulness and wonder is embodied in "Boats sail on the rivers," a song which is Homer through and through in feeling and in form.

Lento J. 188
mf with breadth and elevation

Boats sail on the riv - ers, And ships sail on the seas; But

mf legato

cresc. clouds that sail a - cross the sky *dim.* Are pret-tier *rit.* far than these. *etc.*
dim. *rit.* *etc.*

Widely different, but truly Homer, is "Dancing on the hill-tops," tripping merrily along.

Animato $\text{♩} = 88$
mf with grace and affection
 Danc - ing on the hill - tops Sing - ing in the val - leys
mf
dim. *prit.*
 Laugh - ing with the e - choes Mer - ry lit - tle A - lice
dim. *prit.*

The "Songs from Mother Goose" (Op. 36) sprang directly from the composer's family life, having been written at the suggestion of Mrs. Homer that he compose some songs which the whole family could sing together. In the foreword to these songs Mr. Homer says, "But one day, in the midst of other work I came across some selections from Mother Goose. I realized that here was something which could be equally enjoyed by children of all ages and even by 'Grown-ups' who are children at heart, and from this resulted the present set of songs." Since the youngest Homer was but four years old, most of these songs are very simple

in character, not approaching, as art, the lyrics from "Sing-Song." But there is beauty in "Mistress Mary," fun in the grumpy canon "Solomon Grundy," and keen insight into childish tenderness in "The north-wind doth blow."

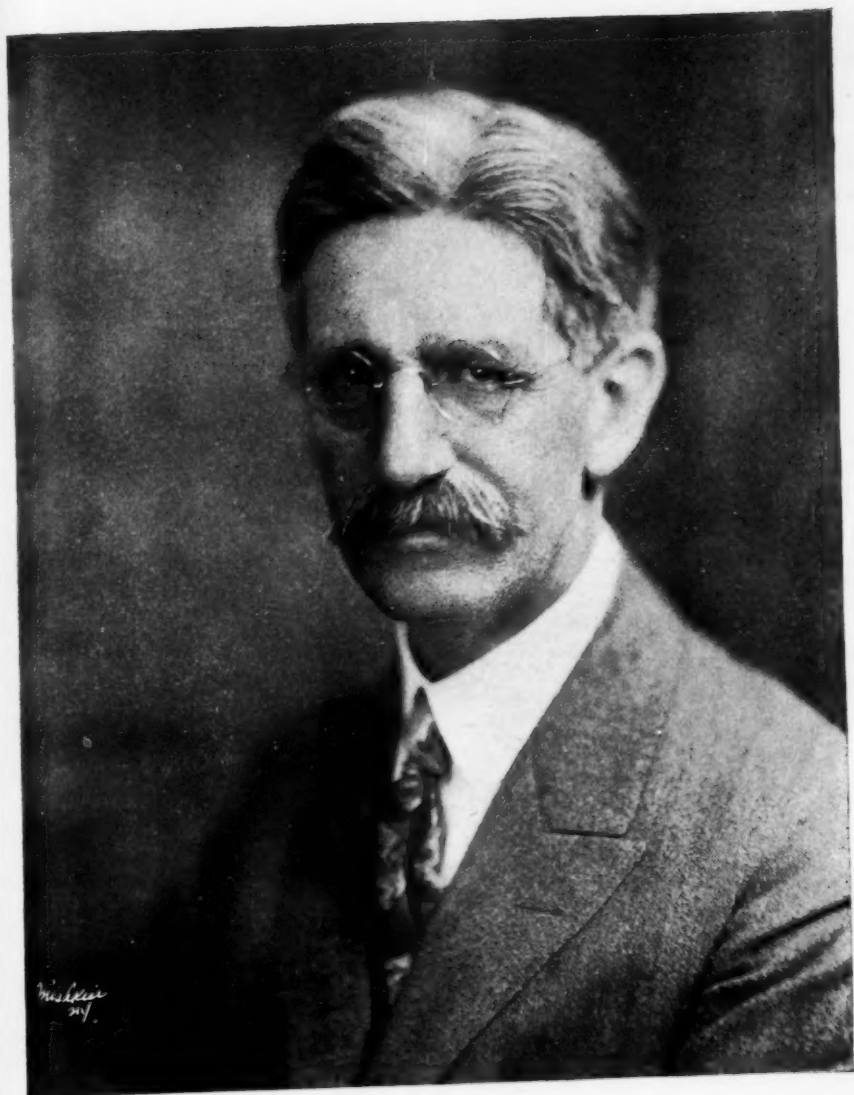
The best of Mr. Homer's settings of poems for children is certainly the "Pirate Story" (Op. 16), which belongs to a set of three songs from Stevenson's "Child's Garden of Verses." Inspiration's rosiest smile was beaming on the composer while he fashioned this song. It seems almost to epitomize Mr. Homer's art: here are, for instance, full and free expression of his keen dramatic sense within a structure that is completely satisfying musically. The strong, melodious bass is here, the Homerician distribution of voices, the vigorous rhythm; moreover, an expressive, organic vocal line, traced on a ground of skilfully managed harmonic color, grateful alike to singer and hearer, imparts a sense of focus and direction.

VII

The reaction of a composer to his song poems would be a fascinating topic for speculation. To just what extent the composer's inspiration is dependent upon the poem it would be most interesting to know. Doubtless a man who is keenly alive to literary and poetic values, whether of form, color, mood or rhythm, would be influenced by better poetry to write better music. Of course, if the poem be regarded as a jingle of words which is to be tricked out with a tinkle of tones, the poetry may be good or bad without much influencing the ideas of the musical carpenter.

Mr. Homer is chiefly concerned with "good" poetry; incidentally he was a pioneer in this respect, turning to literature for song-texts in a period when sentimental rhymes were quite the rage. But there are degrees of goodness, measured chiefly in this case by how much the poem can elicit of the composer's latent artistry. It is quite patent to me that Browning could do less for Sidney Homer in this respect than Stevenson, and that Henley, Rossetti and Yeats struck from his soul more fire than Longfellow, Hood or Tennyson. Whether these differences are due to some subtle affinity (or lack of it) between poet and composer, or merely to a particular poem's impress upon the musician, who can say?

This much is certain: Homer never made a weak setting of a Stevenson poem. The "Pirate Story" is a case in point; but the fact that its subject is juvenile prevents its being called "great," an adjective usually reserved for works dealing with some serious situation or impression. The "Requiem," to Stevenson's famous



Arthur Hower



quatrains beginning "Under the wide and starry sky," rivals "A Banjo Song" in popularity, but it is not the equal of the other Stevenson songs.

Head and shoulders above its fellows rises the noble and moving "Sing me a song of a lad that is gone" (Op. 15), that heart-searching cry of man contemplating the lost sweetness of his youth. In its breezy beginning the high hopes of youth sparkle and gleam like sunlight on a dimpling lake; in the *minore* which follows, agitated triplets throb out the passionate remorse and desperate grief of belated awakening; in the more deliberate *finale*, tumult subsides with the coming of clear-eyed understanding, and in its place abides a resignation that breaks the heart. This song cannot be mutilated by quotation of excerpts; it must be heard entire.

Although "Sing me a Song" is outstanding, it must not overshadow the five other songs of this opus which are all important, representative works. I shall never forget the impression made upon me by "The Stormy Evening" when I first heard it sung by Merle Alcock. The composer depicts simultaneously the hoarse roaring of the stormy night and the fire-lit interior where happy love has haven. Equally worthy, but utterly different in mood, is "The Unforgotten," a song to be avoided by all singers who cannot command simple but poignant feeling.

Of the remaining songs, "Requiem" requires no comment; the others, "Evensong" and "The Country of the Camisards," embody moods of quiet intensity and exalted tone, the former conveying a profound spiritual conviction touched with supernatural mystery, the latter voicing a powerful if subtle protest against war.

VIII

I do not believe that any American, regardless of his relation to the Mason and Dixon line, fails to feel at least a sympathetic interest in the lives of the black folk who, within the memory of many living persons, toiled in the cane brakes and cotton fields of the "Old South." The songs and stories which, more or less directly, have been given us by the "darkies," are a cherished portion of our inheritance; and it will be long before "My old Kentucky Home," "Way down upon the Swanee River," and "Old Black Joe" cease to touch the heart and imagination. Had the colored people contributed only the inspiration of the Stephen Foster melodies, we should still be heavily in their debt. And we must thank them too, indirectly, for the "Bandanna Ballads"

(Op. 22) and "Songs of the old South" (Op. 27), which include some of Sidney Homer's most unusual creations.

These songs, to poems by Howard Weeden, must not be confused with the commercial product known as "southern songs" (descended from the "Ethiopian Ballads"), a phrase that covers a multitude of musical sins ranging from faked spirituals to the mammy shouts of tin-pan alley. Mr. Homer, with characteristic penetration, has caught the spirit of what is genuine and true in this phase of American life, and has embodied it in music whose idiom is akin to the Foster-Nevin-Dvořák tradition, but more individual and independent. One who knows these songs intimately realizes that they are unlike anything else in the lyric field.

I have already spoken of the popular "Banjo Song," which, like its frequently heard companion, "Uncle Rome," does not particularly appeal to musicians, although both are loved by audiences. But he must be completely hide-bound who can not feel the fascination of the crooning monotony of "Mammy's Lullaby," a song which literally consists of "only this and nothing more."



"A Plantation Hymn" is decidedly better music than "Two Lovers and Lizette," which pretends to be only a musical chuckle. In it we find the sturdy swing, the sinewy basses, the full-bodied sonorities, the primitive modal flavor which seem characteristic of the composer when swayed by religious feeling. (Compare "The Eternal Goodness.")

The trend of the "Bandanna Ballads" is further developed and perfected in "Songs of the old South." I grope unsuccessfully for words to convey the full sense of what one feels in listening to these songs, for to me it seems that Mr. Homer felt his way back, back, back until he somehow touched a region of the black man's soul lying far below the surface of his own awareness. And yet this music contains more than the Negro's brain and soul. Perhaps its essence is that of the relation between the blacks and their

white owners—a relation which at its best was strong and beautiful, albeit touched with pathos. But, as I say, this spirit must be felt in the music; words cannot contain it.

Of this opus the songs which most interest me are three: "Way down South," "Long Ago" and "The Song of the Watcher." The second drew me most strongly at first, but although it remains a favorite, I find myself of late hankering more and more after "The Song of the Watcher," so pure, so strong in its Hypo-Dorian harmonies, and so inevitable in its voice line. Its rugged beauty, like that of Gregorian chants, never palls.

"Way down South" could not have been conceived by anyone but Sidney Homer—it is as characteristic as "Dearest." It exemplifies again the Homer daring in setting down exactly what he feels and thinks—a daring justified by complete success in the face of threatened failure. Listen to the first few measures.

Lento (with tenderness) *p* *cresc.*

An a-zure sky, a warm brown face, Soft black eyes and a daz-zling mouth, A

p molto legato *cresc.* *etc.*

After this, one may speak of the beauty of ugliness!

"Long Ago" can only be called a perfect miniature, although it carries a heavily concentrated content. It is rich in emotion, but subdued by an earnest, benign simplicity; austere and somewhat lean, it is firmly fleshed nevertheless, and while, by comparison with the heavy make-up of some moderns, it may seem a trifle pale harmonically, it glows with the natural pink of warm and bounding blood.

IX

I am glad to say that Sidney Homer is not addicted to the invention of "sacred" songs—he would be the last person to father one of those hybrids, which profane both religion and music. But even the least discerning of listeners could not fail to hear in many of his songs a note of deep spirituality—by which I mean, let me hasten to say, nothing which savors of church or creed, but a powerful impulsion toward, and a faith in, the unknown Good.

I have an idea that "The Eternal Goodness" expresses Homer's religious emotions about as adequately as it does those of Whittier himself, for certainly the tense, sustained feeling of this noble music springs from a flowing sympathy with the rapt utterances of the poet. I must quote the first lines of this song, they are so truly Homer.

Moderato (without dragging)

p

O Friends! with whom my feet have trod the qui - et aisles of

p molto legato

poco cresc. rit. a tempo dim. etc.

prayer— Glad wit-ness to your zeal for God and love of man I hear.

poco cresc. rit. a tempo dim. etc.

But while Mr. Homer may regret the "iron creeds" which shackle the souls of men, he turns with unfeigned affection toward the figure of the Galilean. Three poems of widely different character, but all centering upon Jesus, call forth settings in tone which attest the composer's reverence for Him. "Sheep and Lambs" (Op. 31), the poem by Katharine Tynan Hinkson, although presenting the familiar conception of Jesus as the Lamb of God, is musically so free from the pious sentimentality and hollow bombast common in "sacred" songs, and so laden with human sympathy and understanding, that I cannot imagine its being sung in a church. It would sound badly out of place in the musty, dusty and crusty atmosphere of the average church—it would cry out for sunlight and open air!

"Mary's Baby" (Op. 34), the poem by Irene Rutherford McLeod, is theologically shocking, but it reflects a certain lumi-

nous mysticism and glows with human warmth. Like "The Song of the Watcher," it is conceived in the spirit of the old modes and, in addition, the flavor of age is heightened by suggestions of ecclesiastic counterpoint. This song should be compared with "Sheep and Lambs" as showing a widely different reaction to a closely related theme.

It is a longish leap from the gentle Whittier's reverent faith in the Eternal Goodness to the jazzy jubilations of Vachel Lindsay, but as I said before, Mr. Homer, being a tall man, clears the chasm at a bound. Without misgiving he abandons the solemn precincts of the Friends' Meeting House to join the banjo-banging salvation squad at the curbstone. In "General William Booth Enters into Heaven," the new manner, as quoted below, contrasts sharply with that of "The Eternal Goodness."

Allegro giubiloso

f transported, exalted,

Booth led bold-ly with his big bass drum (Are you washed in the blood of the lamb?) The

Saints smiled grave-ly and they said: "He's come." (Are you washed in the blood of the lamb?)

But the poet, disliking Mr. Homer's way of handling his banjo, made complaint in the Poetry Magazine of August, 1927: "It is as though their uniforms were torn off the Salvation Army and they were costumed like High-Church Choir boys and marched down the aisle of an Episcopal Church. I am surely in need of friends. As it stands to-day, the musical treatment of my work . . . is like pasting wall paper on carved wood. They drown out

my stuff and then think they have done me a favor." If Mr. Homer's setting can be characterized as "high-church," I shall hereafter feel justified in referring to "Ol' Man River" as ecclesiastical!

X

In his Weeden songs Mr. Homer expressed emotions, or if you prefer, sentiments that are wholly and peculiarly American; not with the avowed purpose of writing American music, be it said; but Homer being an American, understanding the character of our people, and loving certain outstanding characteristics of American life, it was inevitable that this music should be steeped in the American spirit. Yet, the old South is not the only color in the American scene to attract his attention. In the "Six Cheerful Songs" (Op. 37), he inclines affectionately toward the "old West" of cow-punching days and turns a kindly eye upon the boisterous crowd that throngs the village baseball diamond on Sunday afternoons.

"An Idaho Ball" is an interesting example of how a serious artist can treat a hilarious poem; unfortunately, the lightness of the verse will cause many to underrate the value of its musical setting. But let the music be its own commentator.

Allegro

mf

Bunch the heif-ers in the mid-dle, Cir-cle stage an' do-se-do!

mf

f

Pay at-tention to the fid-dle! Swing her round and off you go!

f

etc.

etc.

"Späcially Jim" is a whimsical and altogether delightful song, a beautiful piece of writing in the sense of fitness and incidentally a grateful thing to sing or to hear. An amusing and apt characterization is the poem "Christmas Chimes," whose playful mood is matched by deft and sprightly music. The humor of the Negro furnishes the text of "A Plantation Ditty," for which a quaint and characteristic musical garment is provided.

Some musicians have declared that in selecting poems Mr. Homer lacks the better part of valor! Be that as it may, when a man decides to use "Casey at the Bat" as his libretto, he is either rushing in where angels fear to tread or displaying magnificent courage. The obviously difficult question of how to manage a narrative of this sort has been answered in the Homer idiom, and in my opinion quite successfully. Certainly the closing *lento* with its ooze of village sentimentality is a masterstroke.

XI

Turning to the settings of Blake, Henley, Rossetti, Yeats and Watson poems, one realizes (quite happily, too) that Mr. Homer's comments on American life, as imaged in the "Cheerful Songs," are moments of relaxation—foils for the intense and serious thoughts which are his real preoccupation. Such thoughts we find, for instance, in the subjective terror and the dark, sinister mysticism of "The Sick Rose" (Op. 26), which holds infinite riches in two brief pages.

Molto lento
p with deep emotion

O Rose, thou art sick! The in - vis - i - ble worm, That

p molto legato



A perfect antithesis, this, to its companion piece "Infant Sorrow" (Op. 26) which is as robust and vigorous as "The Sick Rose" is languid and pallid.

Three poems by Henley: "From the Brake the Nightingale" (Op. 17), "Sing to me, Sing" (Op. 28), and "Dearest" (Op. 24) evoke a more lyrical and introspective expression than anything heretofore. The second song of this trio is broad, ecstatic—sweeping with noble passion to a powerful climax at the close. "Dearest" is slighter in stature, but more intimate and tender in feeling—a song that haunts the memory with its pentatonic flavor and primitive thematic build.

"When Windflowers Blossom on the Sea" (Op. 18) and "April, April" (Op. 23) belong with the less important songs; but the second number of the latter opus, "Ferry Me across the Water," is arch, winsome, sparkling—packed with charm.

Two serious and powerful conceptions are "Michael Robartes Bids His Beloved Be at Peace" (Op. 17) and "Babylon the Great" (Op. 29). The Yeats poem, keyed to tragedy—"the horses of disaster plunge in the heavy clay"—gives birth to a distinguished composition based upon the rearing motive:



The second, by Rossetti, is set in prophetic mood, declamatory, passionate, authoritative. Intense emotion, seething in every measure of the song, matches the poem's swirl of vivid and barbaric imagery.

and she— a-mid— her pomp— are set on fire, on fire.

XII

In calling attention once again to Mr. Homer's unusual taste in poetry I hope I shall not be accused of vain repetition; for it cannot be forgotten that a song-composer, unlike a writer of absolute music, has his working conditions defined by his text, to a great extent. For this reason it is always necessary to consider the music in relation to its poem. Beyond question, such a poem as "The Lone Dog" (Op. 34) could eventuate only in music shaggy, savage and defiant; "The Battle of Blenheim" (Op. 32), even in the hands of a Brahms could bring to birth nothing of outstanding worth; "Cuddle Doon" (Op. 33) *must* be clothed in the soft, airy stuff of tender imagination. Again, "Dinna ask Me" (Op. 33) must impel a composer toward the inevitable type of Scottish love song. But with a few exceptions, Mr. Homer has escaped the influence of types in his songs, for the very reason that his taste in poetry has always inclined toward the individual rather than the typical.

I doubt if any other composer would have turned to the poems which Mr. Homer uses in his most recently published work: three excerpts from "The Widow in the Bye Street" and one from "The Everlasting Mercy," by Masfield, and one from "The Lay of the Laborer" by Hood. But it is quite apparent, I think, that Mr. Homer finds inspiration in the ideas and emotions of his poem rather than in its musical qualities; so, if a text is moving, the element of beauty need not be paramount. In fact, the first of the excerpts from "The Widow in the Bye Street" is the plainest sort of narrative, lacking either emotional or æsthetic appeal. Were space unlimited, it would be interesting to see how the composer copes with this unpromising material, but we must press on to other matters.

Another unlikely song-poem from the usual viewpoint is "The Lay of the Laborer." I must confess that Hood's poem has slight interest for me, and although I like a certain amount of physical labor, I doubt if the joy of wielding "a spade! a rake! a hoe! a pickax or a bill" would ever awaken any creative fire which might be hidden in my bosom! But I commend this song as an example of how Mr. Homer treats these unusual texts.

Greater lyric and dramatic possibilities abide in the lines from "The Everlasting Mercy" (Op. 42), possibilities that have been largely realized in spite of some lions in the path. The gentle spirit of the soul-seeking Quakeress, tender and compassionate, yet deeply grieved at drunkenness, breathes from this passage.

Andante

"Saul Kane," she said, "when next you drink, Do me the gen - tle-ness to

think That ev-ry drop of drink ac-cursed Makes Christ with-in you die of thirst etc.

The greatest passage in this lengthy song is that which expresses the devout, exultant joy of Saul Kane at his delivery from sin. Here Mr. Homer again shows his mastery of strong, direct and simple musical utterance which is also rich and satisfying.



POSTLUDE

Paul Rosenfeld,¹ in his "portrait" of Ernest Bloch, writes as follows: "As a Jew, Bloch carried within himself a fragment of the Orient; was in himself an outpost of the mother continents. And he is one of the few Jewish composers really, fundamentally self-expressive. He is one of the few that have fully accepted themselves, fully accepted the fate that made them Jewish and stigmatized them. After all it was not the fact that they were 'homeless,' as Wagner pretended, that prevented the company of Meyerbeers and Mendelssohns from creating. It was rather the fact that inwardly they refused to accept themselves for what they were." Mr. Homer made no such refusal. As a result, his work is stamped with qualities that are all too rare in American music, especially courage, sincerity and authority. Mr. Homer is not hounded by the devilish fear that haunts so many American artists—the fear of being thought ridiculous—nor is he afraid to stand aloof from movements and tendencies. For instance, no amount of dry, critical laughter will make him abandon his uncompromising championship of the good. Even although his work, like the poems of Sidney Lanier, should be branded for bearing an "ethical taint," he will stand unflinching in his position.

In being himself, Mr. Homer has of necessity been American; and I believe that this unashamed Americanism is responsible for much of the originality of his work. We must remember that Mr. Homer knew little or nothing of music until the age of sixteen, and although this late start probably militated against the acquisition of a facile, conventional technique, in a way it protected the individuality of the artist. Had he been saturated with the

¹In his "Musical Portraits."

music of the German masters from the age of six, as many another young talent has been, he would have imbibed this alien influence so thoroughly that the national flavor would have been largely lost. As it was, by the time he took up the professional study of music, the Anglo-American cast had been imparted to his mind so definitely that its influence remained.

Another factor which helped him retain his own sturdy characteristics, was his love of literature and his concentration upon song composing. The song composer draws inspiration from poems which he selects (probably unconsciously) because they express something which is part of his own feeling, so that in choosing a poem he is really accepting and affirming himself. The definite program provided by the poem becomes the skeleton of its musical counterpart, which will accordingly be shaped in this likeness. The composer of absolute music, on the other hand, because of his greater freedom, is likely to be dominated by influences of a more external character. This is especially true of the American composer, because he has no national musical background and must on that account have his musical roots in foreign soil. Song, having a literary background, may possibly be the field in which American music will first appear.

Once again, in closing, I point to his dramatic trend as another salient trait. "Dramatic" is a word which we use so often and so loosely that we forget or do not vividly sense its real meaning, so we need to remind ourselves that in drama we see character created and interpreted by means of action. This is what Homer loves: to set the stage, create his characters and make them act. And the dramatist is of necessity less subjective than the lyricist, less personal if you will. As a parent lives in his children, he lives in his characters a sort of vicarious existence. Through this instinct Homer gains in detachment and in scope, and hence in truth, for intense personalism is not compatible with true proportion.

The absence of the neurotic and frenetic in Mr. Homer's songs is largely due to this dramatic sense, which prevents identification with his characters, keeping them where they belong—on the stage. Therefore, a wholesome sanity pervades even the intense moments of his music; and I feel positively certain that with the passing of time his scale of emotional values will be found truer than that which would be foisted upon us by some hectic contemporary composers.

WORKS OF SIDNEY HOMER

- Op. 5. Four early slavie poems:
 - No. 1. The Cossack
 - No. 2. The Lost Shepherd
 - No. 3. The Scribe
 - No. 4. The Youth's Departure to the War
- Op. 6. Poems by Tennyson:
 - No. 1. Break, break, break
 - No. 2. Crossing the Bar
- Op. 7. Poems by Tennyson:
 - No. 1. Sweet and Low
 - No. 2. Thy voice is heard
 - No. 3. Home they brought her warrior dead
- Op. 8. Poems by Tennyson:
 - No. 1. The City Child
 - No. 2. Minnie and Winnie
- Op. 9. Poem by Tennyson:
 - No. 1. Enid's Song
- Op. 10. Poems by Thomas Hood:
 - No. 1. A Lake and a Fairy Boat
 - No. 2. Autumn
 - No. 3. It was the time of roses
- Op. 11:
 - No. 1. Daybreak (Longfellow)
 - No. 2. Baby's Outing (Mary Riddel Corley)
- Op. 12. Poems by Browning:
 - No. 1. A Woman's Last Word
 - No. 2. My Star
 - No. 3. Prospice
- Op. 13. The Poor Man's Song (Anonymous).
- Op. 14. The Last Leaf (O. W. Holmes).
- Op. 15. Six Songs from Underwoods (R. L. Stevenson):
 - No. 1. Sing me a song of a lad that is gone
 - No. 2. Requiem
 - No. 3. The Unforgotten
 - No. 4. The Stormy Evening
 - No. 5. The Country of the Camisards
 - No. 6. Evensong
- Op. 16. Three Songs from A Child's Garden of Verses (R. L. Stevenson):
 - No. 1. Pirate Story
 - No. 2. Young Night Thought
 - No. 3. Singing
- Op. 17:
 - No. 1. How's my boy (Sydney Dobell)
 - No. 2. From the brake the nightingale (Henley)
 - No. 3. Michael Robartes Bids his Beloved be at Peace (Yeats)
 - No. 4. To Russia (Joaquin Miller)
- Op. 18:
 - No. 1. When windflowers blossom on the sea (Christina Rossetti)
 - No. 2. The Sick Child (Stevenson)
 - No. 3. The Pauper's Drive (T. Noel)
- Op. 19. Seventeen Lyrics from Sing-Song (Christina Rossetti):

PART I

- No. 1. Eight O'Clock; the postman's knock!
- No. 2. Baby cry—Oh fie!
- No. 3. Dead in the cold, a song-singing thrush
- No. 4. Love me—I love you

- No. 3. Kookoorookoo! kookoorookoo!
- No. 6. Boats sail on the rivers
- No. 7. In the meadow—what in the meadow?
- No. 8. The dog lies in his kennel
- No. 9. Lie abed, sleepy head
- No. 10. Mix a pancake, stir a pancake

PART II

- No. 1. Who has seen the wind?
- No. 2. Dancing on the hilltops
- No. 3. A pocket handkerchief to hem
- No. 4. A motherless soft lambkin
- No. 5. Lullaby, oh lullaby!
- No. 6. Hurt no living thing
- No. 7. Minnie and Mattie and fat little May
- Op. 20. The Fiddler of Dooney (Yeats).
- Op. 21:
 - No. 1. The Eternal Goodness (Whittier)
 - No. 2. There's Heaven above (Browning)
- Op. 22. Bandanna Ballads (Howard Weeden):
 - No. 1. Mammy's Lullaby
 - No. 2. Uncle Rome
 - No. 3. A Plantation Hymn
 - No. 4. A Banjo Song
 - No. 5. Two Lovers and Lizette
- Op. 23:
 - No. 1. April, April (Watson)
 - No. 2. Ferry me across the water (Christina Rossetti)
- Op. 24. Dearest (Henley)
- Op. 25. The Song of the Shirt (Hood)
- Op. 26. Two Songs of Experience (William Blake):
 - No. 1. The Sick Rose
 - No. 2. Infant Sorrow
- Op. 27. Songs of the Old South (Howard Weeden):
 - No. 1. Way down South
 - No. 2. The Song of the Watcher
 - No. 3. When the Angels Call
 - No. 4. Long Ago
 - No. 5. At Last
 - No. 6. Old Watt and the Rabbits
- Op. 28. Sing to me, sing (Henley)
- Op. 29. Babylon the Great (Christina Rossetti)
- Op. 31. Sheep and Lambs (Katharine T. Hinkson)
- Op. 32. Battle of Blenheim (Southey)
- Op. 33. Three Scotch Poems:
 - No. 1. Dinna ask me (John Dunlop)
 - No. 2. Auld Daddy Darkness (James Fergusson)
 - No. 3. Cuddle Doon (Alexander Anderson)
- Op. 34. Four Modern Poems:
 - No. 1. The King of the Fairy Men (James Stephens)
 - No. 2. When death to either shall come (Robert Bridges)
 - No. 3. Mary's Baby (Irene Rutherford McLeod)
 - No. 4. Lone Dog (Irene Rutherford McLeod)
- Op. 35. Homeland (Patriotic song; words by Sidney Homer)
- Op. 36. Songs from Mother Goose (Thirty-five songs)
- Op. 37. Six Cheerful Songs:
 - No. 1. Spacially Jim
 - No. 2. An Idaho Ball (Anonymus)
 - No. 3. Casey at the Bat (E. L. Thayer)

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- No. 4. A Plantation Ditty (Frank L. Stanton)
- No. 5. The Height of the Ridiculous (O. W. Holmes)
- No. 6. Christmas Chimes (Anonymous)
- Op. 38. General William Booth Enters into Heaven (Vachel Lindsay)
- Op. 39. The Widow in the Bye Street (Masefield—three songs)
- Op. 40. Sonata (for Organ)
- Op. 41. Introduction and Fugue (for Organ)
- Op. 42. The Everlasting Mercy (Masefield)
- Op. 43. The Lay of the Laborer (Hood)
- Op. 50. Twenty Little Pieces for Piano

PRINCE IGOR : AN EXPERIMENT IN LYRICAL OPERA

By GERALD E. H. ABRAHAM

BORODIN'S attention was first turned to the mediæval epic of Prince Igor, as a possible subject for an opera, by Stassov in 1871. At his death in 1887 the score was still unfinished—with some numbers in a fragmentary state, nothing orchestrated, the overture not even put on paper (though it was composed). It was the composer's third experiment in writing for the stage, for he had previously attempted a setting of Mey's "The Czar's Betrothed," on which Rimsky-Korsakov was afterwards to base one of his most successful works, and had collaborated with Moussorgsky, Cui and Rimsky-Korsakov in the abortive "Mlada" of 1871.

From the beginning, Borodin realized that the subject of "Igor" was unsuitable for a dramatic purpose, but he loved it and, although he abandoned it more than once, always returned to his love. It is not improbable that the great B minor Symphony was the result of his despair at being unable to realize the "Igor" of his dreams. Perhaps in a sense the Symphony *was* the "Igor" of his dreams.

"Slóvo O Polkú Igorevye"—the Song of the Army of Igor—is one of the oldest Russian manuscript chronicles. When first printed, little more than a century ago,¹ its genuineness was doubted; it was greeted as the work of a Russian Ossian. But it is now universally accepted as a contemporary account, probably by a professional bard, of an actual historical event. As in Ossian, the story is told in rhythmic prose and, indeed, an interesting parallel might be drawn between Macpherson's forgery (if forgery it was) and this fragment from Russia's heroic age. "The poem abounds in great lyrical beauties," we are told, "as well as in original similes and symbols. The tie between Man and Nature is particularly profound. Thus Igor is helped in his flight by birds and trees. Rivers, plains, winds and forests seem to live one life with men. Certain passages, such as the laments of Igor's wife, are poignant in their dynamic simplicity." Borodin, too, must have been deeply impressed by them, for they struck out of him some of the most moving music he ever wrote.

¹J. Müller: Prague, 1811-12.

Such, then, was the poem with which Borodin lived for sixteen years, as Beethoven lived with the "Ode to Joy" for thirty, and Goethe with the Faust legend all his life. So that his "Igor" should be *true*, the composer undertook vast researches. History, archæology, folk-music—all were ransacked and every pertinent fragment carefully studied, so that not merely the superficial atmosphere of the time should be reproduced but its essential spirit made, if that were possible, to live again. And in Borodin the spirit of that old barbarism of the vast steppes and the nomadic warriors did live again. He was naturally adapted to receive and transmit such impressions; the descendant of princes—Caucasian princes—he betrayed both in his personal appearance and in many pages of even his earliest important composition, the E-flat Symphony, the heroic and the oriental elements in his nature. Yet nothing demonstrates more clearly the force of the impact on his mind of the "Song of Igor's Expedition" than the difference between the First Symphony and the Second. Borodin's musical talent lent itself most readily to purely lyrical expression; it was only the subject of "Igor" and the attendant researches that fired the talent to moments of genius and seemingly armed it with a new technique of utterance, almost terrible in its directness. The epic of Igor led Borodin back to primitive things—the natural, the physical, the cruel, the healthy. His later music glorifies them. How Nietzsche would have loved it! An idea lived with for sixteen years must necessarily become part of a man. If the world of "Prince Igor" was only a world of escape from the Academy of Medicine and the lectures on chemistry and the feminist campaign, it was probably more real to Borodin than this other solid and tangible world of science and sociology.

Borodin captured the spirit of "Igor" so miraculously that the weakness of the dramatic substance in which it is embodied is the more deplorable. Igor, Prince of Seversk, sets out to punish a tribe of eastern nomads, is defeated and taken prisoner with his son—and escapes. That is the whole of the essential stuff of the drama, it would seem; the remaining action that pads out the prologue and the four acts of "Prince Igor" appears to be almost extraneous. Igor's brother-in-law stirs up trouble in his absence; but he disappears before the end of the First Act; the disorder he causes merely provides a pretext for a stage-picture, just as the Polovtsian dances do at the end of the Second Act. There is a love-affair in Acts II and III between Igor's son and the daughter of one of the Polovtsian *khans*. It is used to heighten the excitement of Igor's escape, but otherwise the "love-interest" seems to

be introduced as pointlessly and arbitrarily as the "comic interest," the rather childish clowning of the two *goudok*-players. Nor is it an entirely satisfactory explanation to assume that the things we actually see and hear are really employed only to mirror those parts of the story of Igor's own adventures which cannot be shown at first-hand on the stage. Borodin, however fine a composer, was but a fifth-rate librettist—though it must be confessed that even the practised hand of a Scribe or a Boïto could hardly have made much of such an undramatic theme.

Yet before we finally dismiss "Prince Igor" as undramatic let us be quite clear as to what we mean by "drama" and "dramatic." In common usage the word "dramatic" has been so far degraded as to have become equivalent to "startling"; on a higher plane, we speak of the "drama" played out by the two principal subjects of a sonata-movement. In any case an element of contrast and clash is connoted. In this sense "Prince Igor" is merely strewn with disconnected fragments of drama. The only antithesis which pervades the whole work is that symbolized by the Russian elements in the music of the Prologue and Acts I and IV and the Polovtsian in that of Acts II and III—the clash between Slav and Tartar. But if the subject of the opera contains very little material of the type we are accustomed to think of as the proper stuff of drama, it is, nevertheless, a subject that not only provides an admirable pretext for stage-pictures but is perhaps most effectively presented by such pictures.¹ And the pictures are in every case of such a kind that music not merely *carries* them and heightens their effect but adds a new dimension, without which they would be incomplete. That fact alone, it seems to me, amply justifies the making of an opera on such a subject. Our emotions are stirred, not by sympathy with any of the characters (except perhaps Jaroslavna—who, in any case, is off the stage for two whole acts) or by a conflict of wills or ideas, but by the combined sensuous appeal of color, sound and movement. The cumulative effect of all these detached scenes is out of all proportion to their effect taken separately. When they have passed, though passages like the choral dances and the unaccompanied chorus in Act IV may linger as "high lights" in the memory, one is left with a distinct impression of a rounded whole, complete and single. The

¹In this respect a parallel might be drawn with "Boris Godounov." And it is interesting to compare the following remark by Prince D. S. Mirsky on Tolstoy's plays: "Tolstoy's dramatic method was not dramatic—his plays (as he has explained himself) are a succession of peep-show slides, rather than a dynamically unfolded action. So that a play by Tolstoy has more in common with a picture-series like 'The Rake's Progress' than with a real drama."

spirit is too strong for the stuff in which it is embedded. For a few hours we watch these pictures of Russia's heroic age, while our receptive faculties, our imagination and our sensitiveness to impressions, are quickened as only music can quicken them. The fate of Igor (who, like many another hero, is merely a lay-figure) scarcely interests us at all, but the atmosphere in which he so signally fails to live is vital—and communicates its life to *us*. The real subject of the opera, it cannot be emphasized too strongly, is not a person and his adventures but the spirit of a people and a period.

We must accept "Prince Igor," therefore, not as a musical drama but as a concert with action and costumes. That is to say, we must be content to allow it to affect us in the same way that concert-music does. But obviously the stage-setting is essential. An actual concert-version of "Prince Igor" would be as ineffective as a concert-version of "Tannhäuser" or "Figaro." Let us look then at the actual musical stuff of "Igor" for a moment, always keeping in mind the fact that its function is to increase our sensitiveness to pictures rather than to underline a drama. But Borodin never accompanies his stage-pictures, as Wagner was so fond of doing, with tautological translations of them into sound. The picture speaks for itself—qua picture; the music, retaining its tremendous advantage over the other arts of being able to transmit emotion purely, nakedly and directly, simply gives the emotional content of the picture. Or, conversely, one might say that the happenings on the stage illustrate the music. The music is the subject, the action and the picture the objective manifestation. The music seldom comments on, and never analyses, either drama or characters. In this respect "Prince Igor" is as far removed from "Boris Godounov" as "Boris" is from "Tristan."

The vocal lines in "Igor" are either frankly melodic or modelled on Dargomijsky's "melodic recitative." That is: the recitatives are to be *sung*, are, in fact, really ariosi. A direction at one point in Jaroslavna's long recitative in the Fourth Act is highly significant—"avec une grande émotion et presque déclamé." Borodin was fully conscious of the pre-eminently lyrical nature of his opera: "From the dramatic point of view I have always been unlike the majority. Recitative does not enter into my nature or disposition. Although according to some critics I do not handle it altogether badly, I am far more attracted to melody and cantilena."

And he goes on to mention a quality in which lies a great part of the secret of "Igor's" effectiveness: "I am drawn to definite

and concrete forms. In opera, as in decorative art, details and *minutiæ* are out of place. Bold outlines only are necessary; all should be clear and straightforward and fit for practical performance from the vocal and instrumental standpoint. The voices should occupy the first place, the orchestra the second. I am no judge of the way in which I shall succeed, but my opera will be nearer akin to 'Russlan' than to 'The Stone Guest.'" That was literally a confession of heresy, for Dargomijsky's "Stone Guest"—"a recitative in three acts" as Lenz called it—was known among the members of the "Invincible Band" as "the Gospel," and Cui had said that it "constituted the keystone of the new Russian operatic school."

So we find in Borodin's score set-numbers like Vladimir's cavatina and Igor's aria in Act II, as well as conventional choruses, sometimes frankly detached from the context, sometimes connected arbitrarily and without continuity of musical thought. Mingled with stretches of "melodic recitative" are purely melodic phrases, even snatches of formal, balanced melody (as in Jaroslavna's arioso, Act I, second tableau). Here one finds the indefinite outlines of lyrical recitative, supported on a shapeless background of chord melting into chord; there the very clear-cut melodic shapes of folk-music. Sometimes an actual folk-melody is employed, as in the unaccompanied chorus of peasants in Act IV—but on this ground one must tread cautiously, for the score contains no indications as to what material is of folk-origin and what is original. Instead of borrowing from existing collections, Borodin carried out folk-song researches on his own account (the lovely melody of the peasants' chorus was one of his finds) and we have no means of determining the precise nature of the relationship of many of the "Prince Igor" melodies to actual folk-material. On the whole it is probably more spiritual than material, for Borodin had obviously absorbed the idiom and, in using it, reproduced the actual shapes of folk-melody only subconsciously. This is true more particularly of the "Russian" music; in the case of the "Polovtsian," which contrasts so sharply with it, one may venture to probe with a little more certainty into Borodin's treatment of his raw material. But the rather fascinating little problems to which this examination gives rise may be more conveniently dealt with later in considering Borodin's employment of the leit-motif.

The use of the leit-motif in "Prince Igor" is rudimentary—dramatic, for the sake of making "points," rather than systematic as with Wagner. Yet it helps to counteract the varying style and

uneven quality of the music, and the interruption of its continuity by the conventional set-numbers, by stamping it with at least a suggestion of material unity equivalent to the unquestionable unity (or rather, perhaps, Slav-Tartar duality) of its general feeling.

Of "personal" leit-motifs, used on Wagnerian lines in strict association with a character and never failing to appear in connection with him, there are only two—that associated with Ovlour, the Christian Polovtsian who assists Igor to escape, and the striking theme of falling diminished fifths heard when the Khan, Kontchak, first enters, in the Second Act, and throughout the remainder of Acts II and III. The "Ovlour" theme is employed much less frequently, and purely for dramatic emphasis. It is used throughout the scene in which the traitor first approaches Igor with the offer to help him to escape (and some of the solemn Prologue music is heard as the captive Prince's thoughts turn to his people); it calls attention to him as he crosses the stage with "koumiss" for the guards in Act III; and it is used, with some of the other music heard during his previous interview with Igor, in the ensuing scene where he tells the Prince that all is ready for the flight. But here again we are confronted by a doubt which it is impossible to resolve with certainty. Not only is a great deal of the music of this scene between Igor and Ovlour drawn from that of their discussion in Act II, but much of the music of the preceding scene with the guards is also based on material previously used, the quotation of which here can have no dramatic significance. Similarly the Finale to this Act draws largely on themes already heard. Borodin may have intended by this means to draw the threads of his work a little closer, but we must not forget that he left his opera unfinished and that Glazounov, to whom was entrusted the completion and orchestration of this Third Act,¹ may have preferred to make use of Borodin's own themes for the filling up of *lacunæ* rather than to incorporate fresh material of his own in the master's work. On the other hand the quotations from Igor's big aria in Act II (when he tells Kontchak that if he were free he would renew the war and not make peace "till he had drawn water from the Don in his helmet"; when Vladimir, in Act III, is hesitating between love and duty; and during Jaroslavna's lament in Act IV) are dramatically significant and very effective. Then again there is some interesting

¹He also wrote out the overture from memory, having frequently heard Borodin play it on the piano, and scored it. The remainder of "Prince Igor," including the Polovtsian March in Act III, was orchestrated by Rimsky-Korsakov.

play of motives in the early scenes where Galitsky is prominent. The music of his brief assurance of fidelity to Igor in the Prologue ironically provides the material for two fairly long passages in the First Act, when his treachery has been fully revealed; a tumultuous quaver-passage is three times associated with him; and there is a striking "Hail, Prince Galitsky" motif, first sung by the basses, which is afterwards developed at considerable length in the final chorus of the first tableau of Act I ("Let us place him on the throne"). The last four pages of this scene, again, pass in review much that has gone before, stamping the whole with closer musical unity, though in no way illuminating the dramatic action.

Still more interesting are the themes associated with the Polovtsi; and in discussing these we are led back to a matter already touched on, the nature of Borodin's treatment of the raw material he had gathered. The Polovtsian, the oriental, element dominates the music of the Second and Third Acts, and Act II plunges us at once into the new atmosphere with a striking chorus of Polovtsian girls. Four typical phrases of its strangely haunting melody are here quoted separately for convenience of reference.



Their relationship to each other is sufficiently obvious. None is a variation of another; all are, as it were, different aspects of the same idea. It will be noticed that the features common to these fragments are strongly distinctive and therefore of such a type that they naturally give a peculiar stamp to any melody in which they appear. Whether the whole long extended melody of this chorus¹ is a genuine Tartar tune or whether Borodin manufactured it from such fragments as the initial motif of (a), (b) and (d), the falling triplet of (a), (c) and (d), and so on, it is impossible to say with certainty. But it is clearly either genuine raw material or material in only the first stage of manufacture. Either Borodin got most of his "Polovtsian" clichés from this tune or he took this opportunity of making a synthesis of nearly all the melodic and rhythmic features he had observed to be characteristic of the folk-music he wished to imitate—and of the

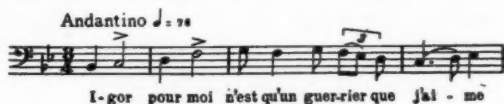
¹The other melodic shapes are similarly related to these but, being inessential to the discussion, are not quoted.

two, the former seems decidedly the more reasonable supposition. With the next step, the tracing of Borodin's "culture" of these germ-themes, we reach firm ground—and incidentally, discover what gives the music of these two acts its *cachet* of unity.

Of the four fragments of Ex. 1, (d) is by far the most important. We recognize it again first as the generating theme of Kontchakovna's cavatina:



The new feature, the appoggiatura emphasizing the triplet, is important and characteristic. The fragment 2a, with the little pendant (to "réponds-moi"), is also heard in the orchestra both in this number and the next, in the latter during a pause in Kontchakovna's recitative. Kontchak's big aria later in the act is based, not immediately on Ex. 1 (d) but on the variation Ex. 2 (or rather on the "descends" part of it), with the appoggiatura notes now broadened into an essential part of the melodic line:—



An accompaniment-figure:—



used later, is more directly derived from Ex. 1 (d). The brief, quick orchestral coda of the aria preserves the melodic shape of the first three bars of Ex. 3, but a fresh appoggiatura is inserted before the triplet. From the new figure thus obtained is developed the music of Jaroslavna's lament which opens Act IV:—



And in Act III Ex. 3 appears transformed into both:—

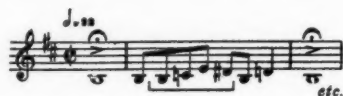


The adventures of Ex. 1 (b) are less striking, but a variation:—



plays an important part in the famous dances at the end of Act II.

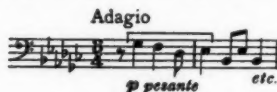
Ex. 1 (c) is particularly interesting, for it is marked by what is perhaps the most personal of all Borodin's melodic mannerisms, one so peculiar to him and occurring so frequently in his music that it almost has the effect of placing his signature to any melody in which it occurs. We find it in the opening of the B minor Symphony:—



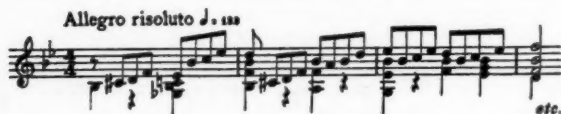
(and the working-out gives it much additional prominence); in the chief subject of the finale of the Second String-Quartet:—



and, inverted, in the opening of the Symphony in E flat:—



In "Prince Igor" it is used in passage-work:—



in the melody to which the curtain rises on the second tableau of Act I:—



and it appears in Igor's great aria (Act II), in the Polovtsian dances and on a dozen other pages of the score.

The "binding" effect of such constantly recurring motives, in music otherwise diffuse and disconnected, is surprisingly strong, the more so, perhaps, because they are often comparatively unobtrusive. And in a slightly different way the triumphal fanfare of the Polovtsian March, which is heard again and again throughout the Third Act, to which the curtain rises and on which it falls, seems to frame, and, if the idea be not too fanciful, give a certain relief to the rest of the music of that Act. It forcibly reminds one, too, of a passage in the B minor Symphony—so strongly, indeed, that one is compelled to recognize that there is a material as well as a spiritual link between the two works. The resemblances between the second subject of the first movement of the Symphony and the final *marziale* chorus of "Igor" are not less significant because they are accidental; a motif from one of the choruses of Act I is used in the finale of the Symphony. And in the "Steppenskizze" also (where again the central idea is the musical contrasting of Slav and Tartar) one easily recognizes the derivation of the *cor anglais* melody from Exs. 1 (a) and (d). If the B minor Symphony was an idealization of the best of the material gathered for the composition of "Igor," "On the Steppes of Central Asia" was clearly made of chips from the same workshop.

CLEMENTI, FORERUNNER OF BEETHOVEN

By GEORGES DE SAINT-FOIX

THERE exist in the music of Clementi a live force, a humor, and above all a pathos, which particularly belong to him and which we may qualify as specifically Clementian. To-day these qualities are officially recognized and established. I should like to add that there are furthermore an inquietude and a sort of restlessness which essentially distinguish the works of the Roman master from all others. These are elements peculiar to his genius; though generally considered the prototype of the classic school, it seems to us to-day to have been strongly affected, especially in certain sonata-symphonies, by the torments of romanticism. I propose to take, therefore, as the main theme of this study, what may be called "pre-Beethovenism," a word-coinage for which I apologize, but which explains itself and which the comparatively recent discovery of the deep significance of Clementi's work inevitably evokes.

What exactly is to be understood thereby? The definition is not of the easiest. It means not so much the pointing out of the frequent resemblances in Clementi's music to certain of Beethoven's themes: many examples of this sort have been noted by the most recent biographer of Clementi in a remarkable book which gives a synthesis of his long life and work.¹ It is something vaster and more profound which we are concerned in establishing.

It is well known that an extensive movement began in music as well as in literature after about 1760. It coincides with the appearance of the new *piano-forte* which marvelously favors the first "romantic" outbursts: it is also, drawn as in relief, particularly striking in the music of the first "pianists." Examination of this music, which especially flourished in Paris, makes it easy at once to form an opinion of its characteristics and its importance.²

I believe there is no scene more propitious than that of Paris to the fruitful outcome of such an investigation. Around 1760, the more and more marked invasion of the Parisian market by foreign music, Mannheimist or Italian, created a sort of confusion,

¹G. C. Paribeni, *Muzio Clementi nella vita e nell' arte*, Milan, 1922, pp. 185-188ff.

²See the author's studies in *La Revue Musicale*.

a mixing of styles, which the nationalistic and routinist French mind at first sought to oppose. But soon resistance weakened and the new tendencies triumphed.

They manifested themselves in a decided taste for tearful cantilenas, effects of intense pathos due mainly to an entirely new use of the left hand which gives more expression and importance to the basses (Schobert). Titles are sometimes given to the various parts of a sonata (Edelmann)—*la Gémissante, la Caressante, la Coquette, la Sémillante*—a return to the habits of the time of Rameau and Couperin, but with a more individual flavor. It is a more individual feeling too which gradually emerges from these first attempts: the substantial genius of Schobert unites with lovely French melodies the profound and troubled expression characteristic of the German. But it seems to me that one of the true French precursors of Clementi is Nikolaus Joseph Hüllmandel, whose feeling is at once precise and intimate and who often achieves a grandeur of pathos nearly approaching that of the Roman master.

These things led insensibly to the last years of the century. Thus it was, in my opinion, the revolution in music of about 1760 that created the music of the Revolution—speaking, of course, only of instrumental music. This new music came into the world with the compositions of such men as Schobert and Hüllmandel. It is built on the same foundations as that which Mozart had occasion to hear when he came to Paris in 1778. It may indeed be said that the revolutionary period very much exaggerated the tendencies which existed more than thirty years before it set in. From this moment dull rumblings are heard to trouble the gallant atmosphere of the salons; imperious themes, a declamatory force, come irresistibly to the fore. And, withal, there are idyllic contrasts, too, beside these paroxysms. I think it may be said without exaggeration that Clementi was able to bring order and wisdom into these things; he was able, with a mastery already absolute, to seize this vague circumambient material and translate it, in two or three sonatas, into a magnificent modernity in which novel audacities and the still intact strength of the past unite. Without exaggeration it may be said furthermore that in some of these pieces we already truly feel the breath of Beethoven, not casually, as in some incomplete and otherwise mediocre work, but fairly in the plenitude of composition which fulfills the expectation it arouses and is not disappointing. This seems to me clearly the result of Clementi's creative strength and youthful vigor. Even while, after 1795, we see the young composer of Bonn day by day

acquiring mastery over the force that penetrates him, in order the better to express it, we cannot forget the great Italian transplanted to England and travelling about France where, surprisingly, he suddenly begins to vibrate with the same emotion and, some ten years later, to speak the same language.

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Accompanied by one of the most famous singers of all time, Gasparo Pacchiarotti, Clementi arrived in Paris during the course of the year 1780. His sojourn in the French capital was to last for several months. Unfortunately the chronicles are silent about him: not a concert announcement, not a single detail has been preserved. We do not even know, officially, if Clementi played at the court. But we know something very important not only to Clementi himself but also for the whole history of the piano sonata and consequently of all instrumental music. The fact is that in this year of 1780 his Opus 5 and Opus 6 were published in Paris by Bailleux. Here, for the first time, one really senses the dawn of the future romantic music: beneath the fingers of a modern pianist, already a prey to sudden changes of humor that are essentially "beethovenesque," there mingle the expansive calm of an *Andante con moto* and the dizzy flight of a *Prestissimo*, running, from the very first movement, the whole length of the keyboard with a technique which, here and there, reminds one of Schumann. And withal, this tendency toward ardor and grandeur of expression always remains faithful to a quite Latin precision, a quality characteristic of Clementi who, let us not forget, was a Roman. All this dates from his first stay in Paris. A coincidence? I believe rather that the young artist had felt the impact of that new French music of which I have mentioned only a few of the best-qualified representatives, masters themselves of the new instrument. The unrest caused by a search for novel effects is already clearly apparent in the music of these composers; and Clementi, at one stroke, achieved the desired end in his two volumes Op. 5 and 6, in which are concentrated his efforts to write in a new style—a style more individual, and especially more persistent in finding expression for definite feelings, than that which had been the delight of the preceding generation. These two works reveal a technique that sometimes recalls Scarlatti; a first movement is followed by a slow movement or a minuet, all are thoroughly impregnated with a "pre-beethovenism" which leaps

to the eyes. And it is already of Beethoven's Op. 1 to 20 that we think here.

In order to throw light upon the beginnings of this precursor of the great master, we must now prove that he had not been touched by "pre-beethovenism" previously to his arrival in France. Before this Op. 5, Clementi, we know, had already produced a celebrated composition which seemed to its first hearers to have reached the height of audacity. His Opus 2, in two parts comprising three sonatas for piano and three with accompaniment of the violin, had been published by Thompson at London in 1773: rarely are first appearances so brilliant. This little volume revolutionized the technique of the *piano-forte*. It was the fruit of the young man's meditation and studies during his sojourn with Mr. Peter Beckford who, as we know, had "bought" the youthful musician at Rome for a period of seven years from his good old father, the watchmaker Nicolo Clementi. He had installed him on his beautiful Dorsetshire estate, Fonthill Abbey, where Clementi enjoyed perfect freedom and had at his disposition a very rich literary and musical library. It was there, undoubtedly, that Clementi acquired the foundations of his intellectual culture, one of the most complete ever possessed by a musician. There too, I believe, he must have acquired the new method promptly applied by him to the new instrument which the *piano-forte* then was. He acquired it thanks to his particular gifts of intuition and reflection and also through intercourse with the great masters, not one of whom was missing from Beckford's famous library.

We cannot to-day judge the Opus 2 by the criteria of 1773. It seems to us neither diabolical nor impossible of execution. The first Sonata, indeed, opens with a grand and impetuous theme in which the rapid octaves demand a strong and supple hand. The manner in which this theme is inverted, from the very first measure of the development, where it is attacked in the bass under the arpeggios of the right hand, testifies to an energy and even an impetuosity altogether untimely—for we must not forget that this sonata dates from 1770, and was not published until three years later. The composer gathered into these first lines the ever increasing possibilities of the future: virtuosity itself is constantly challenged to translate a sentiment already most "romantic" in the violence of its pathos. Some fifteen measures before the return of this theme, one notes that the persistent figure in sixteenth-notes already very closely resembles that in Schobert's admirable D minor Sonata, Opus 14, of which Clementi could not

have been ignorant since the compositions of the Parisian master were widely known in England.

But there is no hiding the fact that, despite their novelty of feeling and of pianistic technique, the three Sonatas in Opus 2 contain long passages of a vacuity and a verbosity which, alas, were to find innumerable imitators in the course of the 19th century. This opening of the first Sonata is an exception: we have to admit that neither the *Allegro assai* of the second (in A) nor the *Allegro di molto* of the third (in B-flat) contributes much that is new to piano music. These first three Sonatas are brilliant, assuredly: they mingle themes bordering on opera-bouffe with long ritornelli decorated with garlands of thirds, arpeggios, and all sorts of figures bristling with trills; their music calls for powerful manual execution, but, in my opinion, it can do nothing to injure or overshadow the expressive strength of a Schobert or the charm of a John Christian Bach. Nor is there a trace yet, in these Sonatas, of that which we are seeking: not the least idea to make one think of the future work of the great man who was born at the end of the very year in which they were written. Clementi had already composed, at Rome or in England, between the ages of 14 and 18, sonatas for the harpsichord which give a charming idea of his early manner; much less pretentious than Opus 2, their music is flowing and graceful, and they deserve to be republished.

The young composer, influenced by the old Italian masters and also by John Christian Bach, adopts in Opus 2 the two-movement form which he is long to employ: he abstains from all slow tempi, which gives these pieces a rather commonplace lightness of manner. But it should be said at once that the finales of the first two Sonatas are clothed in a form which, under Clementi's fecund pen, is to become a source of almost infinite enchantment, so skillfully does that pen renew and enrich it. These two finales called forth opinions the echo of which still persists in musical dictionaries and lexicons, as, for example, Gerber's: sure proof that the first *rondos* of Clementi made a sensation. They are indeed remarkably written and already exhibit, in brief, the processes Clementi employed in those marvelous examples of this form which figure in so many of the sonatas written in his maturity: one finds, notably, even in these first two *rondos*, the unexpected return to the first episode, or a fragment of it, in the course of the central section, often designated by the word *Minore* if the piece is composed in a major tonality. This is one of many characteristic features of Clementian writing.

Two important events were now to follow so close, one upon the other's heels, as to provoke in the soul of the young composer two great crises, both favorable to the progress of those tendencies I have mentioned as appearing during his stay in Paris in 1780. First, there was his arrival in Vienna where, at the close of 1781, his memorable encounter with Mozart was to take place. The importance of this event was indicated by Clementi himself when, many years later, upon the publication of his Complete Works by Breitkopf, he wrote at the head of the Sonata in B-flat: "Performed before the Emperor Joseph II, at Vienna, Mozart being present." The opening of the *fugato* which serves as overture to the "Magic Flute" has been compared to the initial theme of this sonata. Then, nearly two years later, in 1783, another encounter was to stir Clementi, differently, but no less deeply. During his sojourn at Lyons, the daughter of a rich banker of that city, Victoire Imbert-Colomès, who had become a pupil of the young and inflammable pianist, was the cause of a love-affair so violent that Clementi carried off the young lady, intending to flee with her to Switzerland. But the father caused the fugitives to be arrested and the irresistible Victoire was forced to return to Lyons, while Clementi, desperate, went and locked himself up in grim solitude at Bern.

From the arrival and sojourn in Vienna—the contact, that is, with the musical atmosphere of Haydn and Mozart—resulted Clementi's Opus 7 to 11; Opus 14 is the translation into music of the violent passion inspired by the young lady of Lyons.

From Opus 7 on, Clementi's style changes radically. It is freer and more singing, clearly showing Viennese influence. And with the *Maestoso* of the first Sonata it becomes impossible not to think immediately of Beethoven: not only the quality of sentiment in the themes but the emotional effects of the modulations they undergo, the tendency towards thoroughly orchestral writing, seem already inspired by the future master who yet is but an infant. After a return to the old style and to some of the bad habits of Opus 2, in the first movement of the second Sonata, in C, there appears a new and striking anticipation of Beethoven in the subsequent *Andantino allegretto*. This movement seems in a way to follow upon the marvellous *Andante con moto* of the Sonata in B-flat of Opus 5: like this, it is divided by a rapid interlude, in octaves, contrasting sharply with the calm revery of the opening which might almost have been taken from Opus 10 to 13 of the young Beethoven. Moreover, Clementi here introduces those

Allegretto movements taking the place of an *Andante* which are so unutterably beautiful in Beethoven's works: we know of no earlier examples so characteristic and so close to the same inspiration. To be convinced, one need but look at the astonishing *Allegretto vivace* of the Sonata in D, Opus 39, or the second movement, so authentically beethovenesque, of the Sonata (originally *Concerto*) in C, Opus 34. Here there are no themes that lend themselves to citation, but one seems to see before one "prefigurations" of Beethoven: and the date of composition of the two works may be fixed as between 1790 and 1795. It is during this period that truly "pre-beethovenesque" models appear in Clementi's music: they unfortunately have not come down to us in their original form because, before they became the vigorous piano sonatas we know, these remarkable compositions were, of course, for the most part great symphonies of which the themes were heard for the first time, magnified by all the resources of one of the most powerful orchestras of the day, by the public of London. Nor does this fact in the least diminish their properly beethovenesque character: and surely, if the young German composer had heard them first in this form, the music of Clementi would have been engraved even more deeply upon his heart.

If one glances through Paribeni's book,¹ one finds it riddled with striking examples of this sort, and yet the subject under discussion is by no means exhausted. How can one fail to perceive that the great G minor Sonata (Opus 34), which the pianist Louis Berger tells us is merely a reduced symphony, is thoroughly impregnated with Beethoven in form and in spirit? Clementi's biographer points out its relationship with Beethoven's famous C minor Symphony, a rhythmic relationship; and, it should be added, the unexpected return of the grand introduction in the course of the first movement, the fevered progress of which it interrupts, instantly reminds one of the similar use of this device in the first movement of the *Sonate Pathétique*. It is a remarkable and regular thing: the inspiration in Clementi's music most resembles that of Beethoven when the composition opens with a slow introduction. This is true of the Sonata in F (Opus 36) and those in D minor and B minor (Opus 40). It seems practically certain also that these are symphonies reduced for the piano alone. One cannot play the deafening *Presto* finale of the first of these three great compositions without translating it in thought to the

¹See notably pp. 177-191. Nor should even the series of Clementi's *Waltzes* be neglected, in which many resemblances to Beethoven are also to be found.

Temp. $\text{C} \frac{2}{4}$
 From $\text{on} \frac{2}{4}$
 1. $\text{C} \frac{2}{4}$
 2. $\text{B} \frac{2}{4}$
 Tr. in $\text{C} \frac{2}{4}$
 Cor. in $\text{F} \frac{2}{4}$
 Clar. 1st in $\text{B} \frac{2}{4}$
 2nd in $\text{B} \frac{2}{4}$
 Co. S. 1st in $\text{F} \frac{2}{4}$
 2nd in $\text{F} \frac{2}{4}$
 Fl. 1st in $\text{C} \frac{2}{4}$
 2nd in $\text{C} \frac{2}{4}$
 Eng. 1st in $\text{C} \frac{2}{4}$
 2nd in $\text{C} \frac{2}{4}$
 Viol. 1st in $\text{C} \frac{2}{4}$
 Viola in $\text{C} \frac{2}{4}$
 Violoncello in $\text{C} \frac{2}{4}$
 Contrab. in $\text{C} \frac{2}{4}$
Andte con moto

Beginning of the Andante Con Moto from Clementi's Symphony No. 1 in C.
 Facsimile of the Composer's Holograph.

(By courtesy of the Library of Congress.)



orchestra, and then, behold! it is the Beethoven of the *Pastoral Symphony* that rises before one.¹

But before arriving at such characteristic cases as these, there is in Clementi's output a whole series of preparatory efforts which it is most interesting, and even necessary, to observe.

We have already said that with the appearance of Opus 7 at Vienna in 1782, this tendency toward a thoroughly beethovenesque pathos of feeling became more and more evident. It continues in a striking manner in the G minor Sonata of this same Opus 7. Furthermore there should be mentioned the beethovenesque, if incomplete, essays of Opus 9 (No. 2), the extraordinary trio of the Minuet in Opus 10 (No 1), and the whole of No. 2 in this same Opus 10. It is also most advisable to study Opus 12 in its entirety, where the strength, the power of the inspiration, seem to be growing toward the veritable perfection, expressive and technical, reached in Opus 14² which is, in reality, Clementi's Opus 16. These last three Sonatas sum up in their romantic language the love-affair, which, as we have seen, Clementi went through at this time of his life. The fire still burns in Opus 15 (three sonatas for piano and violin) which is, in fact, dedicated to the fair young Lyonnaise. It is unfortunate that we cannot complete the list by some mention of Opus 13, a little-known collection of three sonatas with accompaniment of a violin, dedicated to Count Brühl, in which an entirely new music holds sway (1784). Opening at random a volume containing 24 of Clementi's first sonatas, one comes upon the isolated Sonata (Opus 19) in C. It closes with an *Allegro con fuoco* in 6-8; fourteen measures after the double bar the torrent ceases to flow, stopping on an organ point (dominant of the key of A minor): who but Beethoven would have thought of the furious attack in F major (*fortissimo*) of the second part of the theme, so gently stated in the tonic at the opening of the finale? But there is no end to the illustrations one could cite. The musician, moreover, who is curious to discover further proof, would easily find, even in the really "gallant" music of Clementi—for example, the *Trios* Opus 28 and 29—arguments quite as convincing as those advanced here.

I have endeavored to bring to light a truly striking "case"—at least, so it seems to me—of what may be called anticipations in the realm of musical inspiration. Have we to admit that this is due to some function of the surrounding air, of a certain current

¹Cf. Paribeni, *op. cit.*, p. 190.

²Op. 14 originally comprised the three beautiful Sonatas for piano, four-hands (1784).

born and developed through the action of circumstances, of events political and social, in an era when sensibility was heightened or, to put it more simply, tended towards a certain order of ideas and feelings?

The fact is that, all partiality aside, we must recognize in the person of Clementi one who played the rôle of a great forerunner of our modern music, and not merely that of a good mechanician on the *piano-forte*. Thus more closely viewed, the composer of the too celebrated *Sonatinas* and *Gradus ad Parnassum* is revealed as smitten very early by the great fever of romanticism, but preserving a force and a lucidity which, quite as with Beethoven, are sufficiently sure of themselves to subdue the dangerous elements in this tendency and, in the end, to make them contribute towards the advance of musical art. It is not a presentiment more or less transient, but a fundamental quality of his nature and his artist's temperament, which gives Clementi, in an incipient form, the inflections of Beethoven.

We have of necessity ceased with the close of the first period of Clementi's creative activity (about 1795). But anyone desirous of pursuing the search up to the last days of this man of genius, would find other "anticipations": he might, notably in the *Gradus*, see already realized many of the efforts of the great romanticists, Schumann included. And at brief moments he would even sense sometimes, though from afar, the approach of Richard Wagner!

Here, indeed, is a fine subject for musicological treatment in 1932, the year in which it would be appropriate to commemorate the centenary of the day on which Muzio Clementi quitted this world.

(Translated by M. D. Herter Norton.)

THE EXPERIENCE OF BEAUTY IN MUSIC

By MAX SCHOEN

I.

IT is a fact of common everyday observation that individuals vary to a significant degree in what music means to them, and in what they get out of it. Pages might be filled with quotations from the best and most cultivated minds in illustration of two extreme responses, as well as the gradations between them, from that of Dr. Johnson, to whom music was the "costliest of rackets," to Carlyle, to whom it represented "a kind of inarticulate, unfathomable speech which leads us to the edge of the infinite and lets us for a moment gaze into that." To Romain Rolland music is a "moony light to eyes wearied of the harsh brilliance of this world's sun," while Charles Lamb sat through opera and oratorio "till, for sheer pain and inexplicable anguish, I have rushed out into the noisiest places of the crowded streets, to solace myself with sounds which I was not obliged to follow, and get rid of the distracting torment of endless, fruitless, barren attention."

An excellent, concrete summary of the range of these individual differences in the musical response is offered by the results of a study made by Vernon Lee on *Varieties of Musical Experience*.¹ This investigator asked a number of persons to answer the following question: "When music interests you, has it got for you a meaning which seems beyond itself, or does it remain just music?"

She reports that

about half of the subjects interrogated did precisely answer that undoubtedly music *had* a meaning *beyond itself*, many adding that, if it had not, it would constitute only sensual enjoyment and be unworthy of their consideration, some of them moreover indignantly taking in this sense my words about *music remaining just music*. That for these persons music did not remain *just music*, but became the bearer of messages, was further made certain by pages and pages, often of unexpectedly explicit or eloquent writing admitted to describe the nature of that *message*, to describe the things it dealt with and the more or less transcendental spheres whence that message of music seemed to come.

¹*North American Review*, Vol. 207, 1918, pp. 748-757.

So far for one-half of the answers. The others either explicitly denied or disregarded the existence of such a *message*; insisted that music had not necessarily any *meaning beyond itself*, and far from taking the words "remains just music" as derogatory to the art or to themselves, they answered either in the selfsame words or by some paraphrase that when they cared for music it *remained just music*. And in the same way that the believers in *meaning as message* often gave details about the contents of that message, so, on the other hand, the subjects denying the existence of a message frequently made it quite clear that for them the meaning of music was in the music itself, adding that when really interested in music they could think of nothing but the music.

Concerning the nature of the message or the meaning found in music by the first group of listeners, Vernon Lee comments as follows:

The affirmative answers, often covering many pages, showed that according to individual cases the "message" was principally of one of these kinds: visual or emotional, abstract or personal, but with many alterations and overlappings. But fragmentary, fluctuating and elusive as it was often described as being, and only in rare cases defining itself as a coherent series of pictures, a dramatic sequence or intelligent story, the *message* was nevertheless always a *message*, inasmuch as it appeared to be an addition made to the hearers' previous thoughts by the hearing of that music, and an addition due to that music and ceasing with its cessation.

The other half of the listeners did not deny the existence of a meaning or a message in music, but nevertheless claimed that

whenever they found music completely satisfying, any other meaning, anything like visual images or emotional suggestions, was excluded or reduced to utter unimportance. Indeed this class answered by a great majority that, so far as emotion was concerned, music awakened in them an emotion *sui generis*, occasionally shot with human joy or sadness, or on the whole analogous to the exaltation and tenderness and sense of sublimity awakened by the beautiful in other arts or in nature, but not to be compared with the feeling resulting from the vicissitudes of real life. It was nearly always persons answering in this sense who explicitly acquiesced in the fact that music could remain, in no derogatory sense, but quite the reverse, *just music*.

In his great work, *The Power of Sound*, Gurney also recognizes two types of listeners, which, "though they shade into one another, and may each of them in various degrees be realized by a single individual in listening to a single composition, are for all that in their typical state radically different." The two types of listeners are the *definite* and the *indefinite*, the difference between the two lying in what it is they hear, and the kind of pleasure they experience. In definite hearing there is a perception of form,

namely, melodic and harmonic sequences and combinations, while indefinite hearing involves "merely the perception of successions of agreeable-toned and harmonious sound." This distinction is basic, since for Gurney the outstanding feature of a melody is an "ideal motion," a melody consisting of units of motion, in which each tone "yearns" to move to another tone and each unit of motion or phrase to another unit, both movements tending towards a definite position. These motions, one vertical as pitch, and the other horizontal as rhythm, give each melody a unity of form and a definiteness which constitute its unique individuality. The indefinite listener, therefore, who does not grasp the form, does not hear music at all, but only discreet pleasant sounds. It is the response to the "ideal motion" which is to Gurney the one essential source of the pleasurable experience of music, and which constitutes the æsthetic element of the art of tone. Consequently there are various reasons why

the pleasure arising from any series or combinations of sounds which conveys no distinct musical meaning should be lower and less than that attainable through more definite apprehension . . . first, there is the evidence of the majority of those who at all enjoy listening to music, and who have experienced at different times both sorts of pleasure. Next, we have the right to identify the higher pleasure with the more specialized, that which is appreciated by the more developed and differentiated sense; and which of course belongs to the distinct exercise of the musical faculty, as opposed to the nearly universal susceptibility to the effect of rich and powerful sound. Next, while the impression of mere beauty of sound-color is exceptionally sensuous and passive, not admitting of any of the indirect æsthetic effects given (as we have seen) by the material of architecture, nor of the associations of space and freedom which a painter's most formless hues may gain from the blue sky and the other colored spaces of nature, the apprehension of musical motives, on the other hand, constitutes a specially active kind of self-realization. And lastly, there is the point already sufficiently insisted on, the power of permanently possessing, in some measure at least, forms which have once become familiar, in contrast to the utter transience of all formless sound-effects.

A classification similar to that of Gurney is made by Ortman,¹ who labels Gurney's indefinite hearer as the *sensorial* type and the definite listener as the *perceptual* type. The sensorial Ortman calls the most rudimentary form of response, which has for its basis the raw sensory material of music.

Responses of the sensorial type are limited entirely to what is given in the auditory stimulus itself; and this stimulus is restricted here to a single tone, or an unanalyzed chord. The characteristics of such a

¹*The Effects of Music* (a series of studies edited by Max Schoen) 1927, Chap. III.

stimulus are, in audition, pitch, intensity, duration, quality, and whatever sensorial factor we find must be explained as the result of the effects of these characteristics.

The *perceptual* Ortman describes as the interpretation of the sensorial reaction.

The perceptual response is concerned with auditory things; progressions, sequences, motive, phrase, form, outline, contrast, ascent, descent, movement, and many others. The basic difference between the perceptual and sensorial responses is the presence in the former, and the absence in the latter, of relationships. The sensorial response represents a single impression upon consciousness. In the perceptual, the effect of each separate stimulus is determined by its environment. What has preceded the present stimulus leaves its influence upon it. A tone now becomes a part of a melody, a chord becomes a part of a tonality, and a phrase becomes part of a form.

On the mental side, the perceptual response involves active or voluntary attention.

Since perception is a conscious process demanding for its proper operation both analysis and synthesis, it is accompanied by active or voluntary attention. It means a response to the stimulus different from the nature of the stimulus itself. This added increment is the result of sustained concentration or mental work.

Ortman recognizes a third type, an *imaginal*, which, however, fits perfectly with Gurney's definite response, since its basis is the "ideal motion," namely, a feeling for tonality, anticipated chordal resolutions, responses to a melody *in harmony*, and the like.

A somewhat different grouping is made by Hanslick,¹ whose essay is devoted to combating the popular notion that the aim and object of music is the expression of emotion. By inference from his argument Hanslick would recognize two types of listeners, the impure or the extrinsic, and the pure or the intrinsic. To the extrinsic listener, "sound and its ingenious combination are but the material and the medium of expression, by which the composer represents love, courage, pity, and delight. The innumerable varieties of emotion constitute the idea which, on being translated into sound, assumes the form of a musical composition." To such listeners the substance of music is in what it implies: "the whispering of love, or the clamor of ardent combatants." For the intrinsic hearer, on the other hand, the essence of music is sound and motion, and it expresses nothing but musical ideas—that is, music consists wholly of sounds artistically combined. "The ingenious co-ordination of intrinsically pleasing sounds, their consonance and contrast, their flight and reapproach, their increasing

¹*The Beautiful in Music.*

and diminishing strength—this it is, which in free and unimpeded forms presents itself to our mental vision.”

Of experimental studies on types of listeners that of Myers¹ is probably the most exhaustive and inclusive that has as yet appeared. His classification is based upon introspective reports of fifteen persons of various degrees of musicalness who reported their reactions to six musical compositions played on the phonograph, namely: Beethoven's Overture to “Egmont” (Op. 84), Tschaiakowsky's “Valse des Fleurs” from the “Casse-Noisette” Suite (Op. 71a), and his “Italian Capriccio” (Op. 45), Mendelssohn's Hebrides Overture (“Fingal's Cave,” Op. 26), the first of Grieg's Symphonic Dances (Op. 64), and Kreisler's setting and rendition of Couperin's “Aubade Provençale.”

From his data Myers deduces the following four types of listeners:

1. The *intra-subjective* type. To this type of listener music appeals for the sensory, emotional, or conative experiences it arouses. That is, the attention of the hearer is held by the sensory effects, or the flow of feeling, or the experience of self-activity induced by the music.

2. The *associative* type. In this response the main appeal of the music lies in the extra-musical ideas and associations it suggests. For instance: “I was in the Queen's Hall, a fair girl in a pink dress was playing and another girl was accompanying her. The violinist had a sad look about her. I felt she had a sorrow in her life.”

3. The *objective* type. This listener assumes a critical attitude toward the music, it is analyzed and evaluated as an æsthetic structure. “I noticed by what simple means in these modern days he gets his effects . . . I noticed also . . . how he gathered up his climax by syncopation.”

4. The *character* type. Here the music is personified as a subject, given character traits such as morbid, joyful, dainty, mystic, reckless, playful, etc.

II.

What, then, is the experience of beauty in music?

The first principle as a basis for evaluating the relative æsthetic significance of the various attitudes outlined above is borrowed here from William James. “It is a good rule in physiology,” says James, “when we are studying the meaning of an organ, to ask after its most peculiar and characteristic sort of

¹The *Effects of Music*, Chap. II.

performance, and to seek its office in that one of its functions which no other organ can possibly exert. Surely the same maxim holds good in our present quest. The essence of religious experiences, the thing by which we finally must judge them, must be that element or quality in them which we can meet nowhere else, and such a quality will be of course most prominent and easy to notice in those religious experiences which are most one-sided, exaggerated and intense." In its bearing upon the present problem this principle suggests that the essence of the æsthetic experience in music, or for that matter, the æsthetic experience derived from any source whatever, must possess a quality of a unique nature, a quality that marks off this experience from other types of experiences such as the good, or true, or useful. The experience of beauty *is* good, true, and useful, but the quality that stamps it as "beauty" is not its goodness, truth, or utility, since an experience may have all of these, and yet not be beautiful.

Second, every experience derived from music cannot, by virtue of that fact alone, be an experience of beauty, for, if it were, then beauty would be anything and everything, and therefore nothing. When one exclaims, "This is beautiful," he must have experienced a quality which led him to designate the object as beautiful instead of designating it by some other quality. Likewise, if several persons label an object as being beautiful they must have experienced a common quality, which led them to a common response.

Third, in a discussion of the nature of beauty the issue involved is not that concerning the *validity* of the different kinds of experiences that may be derived from a work of art, but of the relative significance of the experiences as experiences of beauty. Therefore, while all reactions to a work of art are equally *valid*, as experiences, for the person experiencing them, they are not of equal *value* as beauty simply because their stimulus is an art object. While it is true, then, that of tastes there is no disputing, it is equally true that of tastes there is evaluating, the basis for the evaluation being the essential nature of the experience under discussion, this essential nature lying in that unique quality which distinguishes that experience from other experiences.

III.

The essential nature of the æsthetic experience in music is to be sought, following the suggestion of James, in those cases in which it manifests itself in its most exaggerated, one-sided and

intense form. The procedure for our search is thus evident: (1) an examination of what musicians and persons of outstanding musical taste such as Gurney and Hanslick have to say about their musical experiences; (2) an inquiry into the question of whether experimental studies on the subject support the conclusion drawn from (1).

1. Several years ago the writer sent out questionnaires and also had interviews with a number of prominent musical artists, with the object of obtaining from them a statement of their musical experiences. The question put to these persons was:

"When you find yourself in an attitude of intense musical appreciation, what is your general condition of being, physical and mental?"

The answers to this question from a few of the persons follow:

I am usually in a state of muscular tension—with my hands clenched. If I am really in the æsthetic ecstasy, I am absolutely oblivious of my surroundings. I cannot get to that point except by the piano—that is really the only instrument that can give me the genuine æsthetic feeling—then everything is black except where the piano is, and I am very tired afterwards. The effect stays with me for a day or two. I feel as though I do not want to be interrupted by anybody or anything rough or harsh, in any sense. I want nothing rough or coarse which could not share that state with me. . . . If I begin to think of any matters of personal interest or any memories while listening, then it is a sure sign that the music is mediocre, that it does not hold my attention as music. There are some associations in situations of this kind. If I hear some dance music, I may feel slightly different in mood, and I can sometimes trace it to a more or less temporary emotional experience, to some association with the dance. Even matters of momentary interest can have that influence upon the music that is not the musical experience at all. I might have the same experience with anything else. The smell of a perfume may have its associations. It is not an æsthetic one, but you can have a very definite association with some girl who has used that particular type of perfume. I have had experiences in which the music had a soothing effect, and I started day-dreaming, perhaps extravagantly, of power and mastery, perhaps I dream of doing something which reveals social approval. If I do that, it means that I do not care a rap about the music.

When I am in a state of the most intense enjoyment of music, I am never introspective. I never catch myself at it. Looking back on it, I should say that I have rather become the music than remained something apart with some attitude towards it. On the less intense absorption, I should say that music in a very definite way restores me in body, mind, and spirit. I am afraid I am a poor informant, though, in this case, for I really cannot state confidently any one reaction except that of a rapt condition, at the end of which I take a deep breath and come back. My enjoyment is derived directly from the music. Associations or imagery, even when suggested by the title, fade from my mind

as I listen to the music, and I do little except get my mouth set for the particular kind of taste which I am about to receive.

When I find myself in the act of intense enjoyment, it is generally after the experience is over. For such moments, loss of myself is fairly complete. This is, however, for special occasions; the ordinary rhythmic enjoyment of music is very much on the plane of any usual sensuous enjoyment, as eating or drinking. The self is perfectly conscious of the thing being enjoyed. In the supreme moment there seems to be a fusion and I am one with the thing heard. Such moments cannot be but a few seconds in duration, but they raise the whole attitude into a different level. . . . Music that does not affect me strongly often sets me off into a reverie, if it does not roil me. But in the supreme moment the enjoyment seems to come directly as the result of the music, without any suggestion whatever, except that of motion and movement. What I seem to feel is perfection, the realization of an ideal, and perfect harmony between matter and spirit. Why this should move me so, I am unable to tell unless it may be that as in our ordinary consciousness our physical, mental, and spiritual limitations are constantly with us and we are living most of the time, because of our personality, in a state of strife, whenever a perfect moment comes and we forget ourselves, and find the strife giving place to a perfect union, we experience a certain vacation or respite from ourselves.

Hanslick is nothing short of combative in his insistence as to what a truly musical experience is. He writes: "The task of clearly realizing music as a self-subsistent form of the beautiful, has hitherto presented unsurmountable difficulties to musical æsthetics, and the dictates of 'emotion' still haunt their domain in broad daylight. Beauty in music is still as much as ever viewed only in connection with its subjective impressions, and books, critiques, and conversations continually remind us that the *emotions* are the only æsthetic foundation of music, and that they alone are warranted in defining its scope." This proposition Hanslick claims to be entirely false:

The beautiful, strictly speaking, *aims at nothing*, since it is nothing but a form which, though available for many purposes according to its *nature*, has, as such, no aim beyond itself. If the contemplation of something beautiful arouses pleasurable feelings, this effect is distinct from the beautiful as such. I may, indeed, place a beautiful object before an observer, with the avowed purpose of giving him pleasure, but this purpose in no way affects the beauty of the object. The beautiful is and remains beautiful though it arouse no emotion whatever, and though there be no one to look at it. In other words, although the beautiful exists for the gratification of an observer, it is *independent* of him.

In this sense music, too, has no *aim* (object) and the mere fact that this particular art is so closely bound up with our feelings by no means justifies the assumption that its æsthetic principles depend on this union.

What then constitutes the æsthetic response in music? In Hanslick's opinion "the art aims, above all, at producing something beautiful which affects not our feelings, but the organ of pure contemplation, our imagination."

In the pure act of listening, we enjoy the music alone, and do not think of importing into it any extraneous matter. But the tendency to allow our feelings to be aroused implies something extraneous to the music. An exclusive activity of the *intellect*, resulting from the contemplation of the beautiful, involves not an æsthetic but a *logical* relation, while a predominant action on the feelings brings us on still more slippery ground, implying, as it does, a *pathological* relation.

The beautiful in music, Hanslick insists, is specifically musical:

By this we mean that the beautiful is not contingent upon, or in need, of any subject introduced from without, but that it consists wholly of sounds artistically combined. . . . What is it then that music expresses? The answer is: musical ideas. Now, a musical idea, reproduced in its entirety, is not only an object of intrinsic beauty, but also an end in itself, and not a means for representing feelings and thoughts. The essence of music is sound and motion.

It is extremely difficult to define this self-subsistent and specifically musical beauty. As music has no prototype in nature, and expresses no definite conceptions, we are compelled to speak of it either in dry, technical terms, or in the language of poetic fiction. Its kingdom is, indeed, "not of this world." All the fantastic descriptions, characterizations, and periphrases are either metaphorical or false. What in any other art is still descriptive, is in music already figurative. Of music it is impossible to form any but a musical conception, and it can be comprehended and enjoyed only in and for itself.

The ideas which a composer expresses are mainly and primarily of a purely musical nature. His imagination conceives a definite and graceful melody aiming at nothing beyond itself. Every concrete phenomenon suggests the class to which it belongs, or some still wider conception in which the latter is included, and by continuing this process, the idea of the absolute is reached at last. This is true of musical phenomena. This melodious *Adagio*, for instance, softly dying away, suggests the ideas of gentleness and concord in the abstract. Our imaginative faculty, ever ready to establish relations between the conceptions of art and our sentiments, may construe these softly-ebbing strains of music in a still loftier sense, *e.g.*, as the placid resignation of a mind at peace with itself, and they may arouse even a vague sense of everlasting rest.

When we turn to Gurney we find once more that he leaves no doubt as to what constitutes for him a truly musical experience. Gurney insists, as does Hanslick, that "expressiveness of the literal and tangible sort is either *absent or only slightly present* in an immense amount of impressive Music;" that to "suggest describable images, qualities, or feelings, known in connection

with other experiences, however frequent a characteristic of music, makes up no inseparable or essential part of its function; and that this is not a matter of opinion, or of theory as to what should be, but of definite everyday fact." Furthermore, "when we come to the *expression* aspect of music, to the definite suggestion or portrayal of certain special and describable things, we should naturally expect to be able to trace in some degree the connection of any special suggestion or shade of character with some special point or points in the musical form and the process by which we follow it. . . . None of them . . . can be held accountable for any musical *beauty* which may be present; a tune is no more constituted beautiful by an expression, *e.g.*, of mournfulness or of capriciousness, than a face is. The impressiveness which we call beauty resides in the unique musical experience whose nature and history have just been summarized."

In the writings and expressions of personal experience presented above, we find an insistence upon a unique attitude, present in the truly musical experience, the substance of which appears to be that in this experience everything that is not of the essence of the music itself is ruled out of consciousness, while nothing is present in the mind of the listener but an awareness of "the thing itself." Attention is completely focused upon and absorbed by the music itself to the extent that subject and object become merged one with the other. An excellent summary of what is involved in this experience is presented in Bell's doctrine of Significant Form, which, although its advocate insists it is a new principle "by reference to which the respectability, though not the validity, of all æsthetic judgment can be tested," is in fact but a succinct statement of the core of all æsthetic theory, minus the trimmings of definitions, namely, the liking of a thing *for itself* in contrast to the valuing of a thing *as a means towards something else*. It has been variously called "intrinsic," "independent," "primary" value. It simply marks off the attitude opposite to the practical attitudes. Significant Form Mr. Bell¹ defines as "arrangements and combinations that move us in a particular way"; and this particular way consists in the fact that what is present to mind in the experience is nothing but consciousness of form *per se*, that is, the thing itself, or those of its properties without which it would not be what it is. An account given by Mr. Bell of his own musical reaction will make clear what he means by Significant Form and also demonstrate the identity of his point of view with that of Gurney and Hanslick:

¹Art.

I am not really musical. I do not understand music well. I find musical form exceedingly difficult to apprehend, and I am sure that the profounder subtleties of harmony and rhythm more often than not escape me. The form of a musical composition must be simple indeed if I am to grasp it honestly. My opinion about music is not worth having. Yet sometimes at a concert, though my appreciation of the music is limited and humble, it is pure. Sometimes, though I have a poor understanding, I have a clean palate. Consequently, when I am feeling bright and clear and intent, at the beginning of a concert for instance, when something that I can grasp is played, I get from music that pure æsthetic emotion that I get from visual art. It is less intense, and the rapture is evanescent; I understand music too ill for music to transport me far into the world of pure æsthetic ecstasy. But at moments I do appreciate music as pure musical form, as sounds combined according to the laws of a mysterious necessity, as pure art with a tremendous significance of its own and no relation whatever to the significance of life; and in those moments I lose myself in that infinitely sublime state of mind to which pure visual form transports me. How inferior is my normal state of mind at a concert. Tired or perplexed, I let slip my sense of form, my æsthetic emotion collapses, and I begin weaving into the harmonies, that I cannot grasp, the ideas of life. Incapable of feeling the austere emotions of art, I begin to read into the musical forms human emotions of terror and mystery, love and hate, and spend the minutes, pleasantly enough, in a world of turbid and inferior feeling. At such times, were the grossest piece of onomatopoetic representation—the song of a bird, the galloping of horses, the cries of children, or the laughing of demons—to be introduced into the symphony, I should not be offended. Very likely I should be pleased; they would afford new points of departure for new trains of romantic feeling or heroic thought. I know very well what has happened. I have been using art as a means to the emotions of life and reading into it the ideas of life. I have been cutting blocks with a razor. I have tumbled from the superb peaks of æsthetic exaltation to the snug foothills of warm humanity. It is a jolly country. No one need be ashamed of enjoying himself there. Only no one who has ever been on the heights can help feeling a little crestfallen in the cozy valleys. And let no one imagine, because he has made merry in the warm tilth and quaint nooks of romance, that he can even guess at the austere and thrilling raptures of those who have climbed the cold, white peaks of art.

IV.

Let us now see what the experimental studies tell us about this problem. If, in keeping with our findings, we divide listeners into two general types, (1) the *intrinsic* or those who are engrossed in "the thing itself" and (2) the *extrinsic*, or those to whom music is a means towards an end, it is apparent that Ortman's *sensorial* type, Myer's *intra-subjective*, *character* and *associative* types, and Lee's "message" type belong under (2), while the perceptual and imaginal types of Ortman, the objective type of Myers, and the

"no message" type of Lee come closest to (1). What have these investigators to say about the musical value of the types as established by them?

The sensorial reaction, according to Ortman, is typical of children, untrained adults, untalented pupils, and is the predominant factor in popular music. Thus Ortman's findings support the conclusion of Gurney as to the musical significance of the sensorial-indefinite response. Of the perceptual and imaginal types in which attention to structural form, or the substance of music as music, is predominant, Ortman says: "The perceptual response in all but a very primitive form, is largely absent from the response form of the untalented person. This type of response is preëminently that of the talented person. . . . We may expect to find the auditory imaginal response characteristic essentially of trained musicians and superiorly talented laymen who have frequent associations with auditory stimuli." Again it is apparent that Ortman's findings support both Gurney and Hanslick.

For the musical significance of the types established by him, Myers concludes that the objective attitude towards music, "in which the musical material is considered in reference to the listener's standard, occurs most frequently among those technically trained in music, who tend to adopt a critical attitude and are interested in the material of their art." This type of listener has a tendency to suppress all personal feelings, activities, associations, and characterizations that the music might evoke, in favor of the critical, analytical standpoint. As to the place of associations or imagery in the musical responses, Myers claims that

in the grossly unmusical, music evokes no associations, because it evokes no corresponding emotion. In the professional musician, music also evokes few or no associations, because he tends to inhibit them by his assumption of a critical, objective attitude. Among the most highly musical, associations tend also to be repressed, because the music comes to be listened to for its own meaning and beauty, apart from the meaning and beauty derived from associations. In four of the five persons whose temperament was extremely artistic but who had little or no technical knowledge of music, associations were to a large extent replaced by symbols, *e.g.*, of pattern, color, or expanse, the activities of which, however, tended themselves to evoke associations.

When the average person listens to music, then, associations are enjoyed for their own sake, adding enormously to the total æsthetic appreciation obtainable. The associations may be in themselves beautiful; they invite the listener to share in the beauty of a story and in the emotions of the persons created in his imagination. Among the more highly musical I find that associations are more particularly apt to intrude when the music is felt to be "stagey," unreal, meretricious, or

vulgar. Thus M reports associations as the music "began to get more barbaric" and as he "lost interest in the music." He observes, however: "The middle of the second movement (which he enjoyed) switched me off my imagery, and I returned to the pure consideration of the music."

It is by no means strange that associations should appear among the highly musical when music lacks interest or inherent beauty, whereas the less musical tend to appreciate music not so much on the grounds of its inherent beauty as for the enjoyment of the associations evoked. The explanation depends on difference of æsthetic level, the level of the musically gifted person standing higher than that of one averagely musical. So long as the former, attending merely to the music, *qua* music, can maintain his high level of æsthetic enjoyment, associations are debarred from consciousness. But when for any reason he fails to maintain that level, *e.g.*, because his æsthetic appreciation ceases, then the products of lower-level aspects enter, *e.g.*, associations more or less incongruous with the enjoyment of beauty.

The intra-subjective aspect Myers puts down as the lowest kind of beauty since in this attitude the person surrenders himself to the sensory, emotional, and impulsive effects of the music. In this case,

as the listener gives himself up to the enjoyment of such experiences, all that he gets is delight or joy, not beauty. As Bullough rightly points out, a process of psychological "distancing" is required in order that any of his sensations or emotions may appear beautiful. One must look on them with a certain detachment, to a certain extent impersonally. He has to project the beauty into his sensory, emotional or conative experience, instead of subjectively appreciating the delight or joy to which they give rise. He has to look on them as a spectator, and in some measure at least to regard that experience as constituting in and for itself a living, unitary, independent entity.

Myers summarizes his general conclusions from his studies as follows:

We can now see how the various aspects which we have distinguished in the listener may each play a part in the awareness of beauty, and how the different fundamental connections of music, with courtship, with dancing, and rudimentary language, may each contribute to æsthetic enjoyment. These different connections may be differently stressed in different persons to-day, so that one tends specially to sexual, another to dramatic, another to verbal associations with music. But we come to recognize that, apart from these connections, music may be appreciated for its own inherent beauty, that is to say, apart from its sensuous, emotional or conative influences and from associations, symbols and products of "animistic" characterizations. The one common and essential attitude required for æsthetic enjoyment is one of detachment. The listener must view the music, as Bullough rightly insists, from a certain psychological "distance." If that distance be excessive, as occurs in listening for the first time to exotic music or to other unfamiliar styles

of music, the person feels too remote to get, as it were, to grips with the art material. It is overdistanced. On the other hand, it is underdistanced when he surrenders himself wholly to its influence in such a way that he is a more or less passive instrument, played upon by the music, without paying any regard to his sensations, images, emotions, or impulses, save in so far as they have immediately personal and "practical" import.

Of her two types of listeners, the one to whom music was just music, and the other to whom the significance of music lay in the message that is conveyed, Lee finds that

the more musical answerers were also those who repudiated the message, who insisted that music had a meaning in itself, in fact, that it remained for them "mere music." A certain number of highly musical subjects not only declared this to be the case with themselves, but foretold that we should find it so with every sufficiently musical hearer. Their own experience was that the maximum interest and maximum pleasure connected with music can leave no room for anything else. And this answer led to the framing of queries bearing upon musical attention; queries which elicited some very unexpected information. For the distinctly musical answerers proved to be those who admitted without hesitation that their musical attention was liable to fluctuations and lapses. They were continually catching themselves thinking of something else while hearing music. They complained of their own inattention and divagation. But—and this is the important point in the evidence—these lapses were regarded by them as irrelevancies and interruptions; the music was going on, but their attention was not following it. The less musical answerers, those also who found in music a meaning beyond itself, seemed comparatively unaware of such lapses or interruptions. From some of their answers one might have gathered that rather unmusical people could sit through two hours of a concert with unflagging enjoyment. But further sets of inquiries revealed that, although unbroken by boredom, restlessness or the conscious intrusion of irrelevant matters, that enjoyment was not confined to the music. When asked whether the music suggested anything, they abounded in accounts of inner visions, trains of thought and all manner of emotional dramas, often most detailed and extensive, which filled their minds while, as they averred, they were listening to the music; indeed some of which, they did not hesitate to admit, constituted the chief attraction of the music.

Lee finally concludes that there exist two different modes of response to music, namely: one,

listening to music, the other, *hearing* music with lapses into merely over-hearing it. Listening implied the most active attention moving along every detail of composition and performance, taking in all the relations of sequences and combinations of sounds as regards pitch, intervals, modulations, rhythms, and intensities, holding them in the memory and coördinating them in a series of complex wholes, similar (this was an occasional illustration) to that constituted by all the parts, large or small,

of a piece of architecture; and these architecturally coördinated groups of sound-relations, i.e., these audible shapes made up of intervals, rhythms, harmonies and accents, themselves constituted the meaning of music to this class of listeners; the meaning in the sense not of a message different from whatever conveyed it, but in the sense of an interest, an importance, residing in the music and inseparable from it.

Hearing music, on the other hand, as it is revealed by our answerers, is not simply a lesser degree of the same mental activity, but one whose comparative poverty from the musical side is eked out and compensated by other elements. The answers to our questionnaires show that even the least attentive hearers have moments, whose frequency and duration depend both on general musical habits and on the familiarity of the particular piece or style of music, of active listening; for they constantly allude to their ability to follow or grasp, as they express it, the whole or only part of what they happen to hear. But instead of constituting the whole bulk of their musical experience (in such a way that any other thought is recognized as irrelevant) these moments of concentrated and active attention to the musical shapes are like islands continually washed over by a shallow tide of other thoughts, memories, associations, suggestions, visual images and emotional states, ebbing and flowing round the more or less clearly emergent musical perceptions, in such a way that each participates of the quality of the other, till they coalesce, and into the blend of musical thoughts there enters nothing which the hearer can recognize as inattention, as the concentrated musical listener recognizes the lapses and divagations of which he complains.

V.

The answer to the question as to what constitutes the æsthetic attitude in music stands out clearly and insistently. The beautiful in music lies in "listening to music," and not in "hearing music"; not in the associations, images, reflections, emotions, that it may arouse, as secondary or derived effects, but in the experiencing of the "thing itself," the musical form. And even this experiencing of the "thing itself" must be direct, spontaneous, detached, and not arbitrary, critical or analytical. That is, it must be "listening to music" not "listening *about* music." Myers rightly insists that "to treat the art material as a mere inanimate object having a certain value in reference to the person's standard is . . . merely a last resource in the case of the untrained; while in the case of the technician it is a consequence of his absorption in the material. It is the refuge of the untrained in the absence of the potentially æsthetic aspects of character, associations, and intra-subjective experience. It is the resource of the artist, in his endeavor by repression to escape from the influence of the other aspects, in order, it may be, to obtain the highest appreciable beauty of music, the beauty of musical meaning which is inexpressible in

any other terms." The conscious critical attitude is destructive of the æsthetic experience, since a process of analysis destroys the very substance of the object that is being analyzed.

It may be appropriate here, in view of the conclusion drawn as to the nature of the beautiful in music, to close this study with a discussion of the reasons why, both by direct claim and indirect intimation, music has been called the measure of all the arts.

Why is music the measure of the arts? In what way, more than any of the other arts, is its material most susceptible to the creation of the experience of beauty?

In the first place, since the material of music is in itself most abstract, it lends itself to abstract form and is least liable to suggest anything beyond itself, or in other words, it most easily induces the condition of mental detachment. A tone is the most abstract of all the material of the arts, is least liable to suggest connections or relationships or meanings outside of itself. A tone is just a tone, whether high or low, smooth or rough, whereas even a color which is probably the most abstract, next to a tone, can carry with it very often a suggestion of an object of which it is an attribute. The very being of a tone is an end in itself, free of complications or implications that lie outside its own essence.

The same is true of a combination of tones into a melody. The logical sequence of tones is just a melody, never anything more than a melody, unless something is imposed upon it by the mind. A melody

makes no assertion; so its claims on our admiration can have nothing to do with the "True." It serves no purpose; so it raises no question as to the æsthetic worth of imitation, and the proper relation of art to nature is a problem which it never even suggests. From the endless controversies about Realism, Idealism, and Impressionism, with which the criticism of other arts have been encumbered, musical criticism is thus happily free; while the immense changes which have revolutionized both the artistic methods and the material resources of the musician—changes without a parallel either in literature, in painting, in sculpture, or even in architecture—have hindered the growth of an orthodox tradition. Music thus occupies in some respects a place apart; but its theoretic importance cannot on that account be ignored. On the contrary, it becomes all the more imperative to remember that no æsthetic principle which fails to apply to it can be other than partial and provincial. It can never claim to be a law governing the whole empire of æsthetic beauty.

In the second place, a material that is abstract can at its utmost embody but an abstract content. From all experimental evidence on the effects of music, the conclusion stands out that

this effect is always of the nature of a mood but never of an emotion. Thus, music may create a condition of sublimity, sadness, gayety, but never produces anger, jealousy or fear. Even the most programmatic of program music results most often in a general feeling rather than an emotion. Thus, even in its content, if one may speak of the content of music aside from its form, music creates a condition of affective detachment and is least liable to give reactions of life in the form of emotions. It is probably for this reason that Schopenhauer goes directly to music when in search of the best and most complete avenue for the escape from life.

In the third place, music is the measure of the arts because it satisfies in the largest degree the principle of unity of matter and material. In the words of Walter Pater's "Renaissance":

For while in all other kinds of art it is possible to distinguish the matter from the form, and the understanding can always make this distinction, yet it is the constant effort of art to obliterate it. That the mere matter of a poem, for instance, its subject, namely, its given incidents or situation—that the mere matter of a picture, the actual circumstances of an event, the actual topography of a landscape—should be nothing without the form, the spirit, of the handling, that this form, this mode of handling, should become an end in itself, should penetrate every part of the matter; this is what all art constantly strives after, and achieves in different degrees.

Where form and content are separable, the content is always concrete and definite, and the more concrete and definite the content the closer it is to life, the closer to life it is the more meaning it has, and the more meaning it has the further it is removed from mental and affective detachment. In a melody the content is the form and the form is the content, and any separation of the two is always the result of forcing something in the mind of the auditor upon the music, rather than a resemblance of the music to anything outside of itself. Thus, we find that in music the ideal conditions for beauty as a self-sufficient, complete-in-itself, intrinsic experience, are most completely met. Even the history of music bears evidence of the purity of music as pure, formal beauty, free of any entangling alliances with anything not of its intrinsic qualities, since we find that program music, which attempts to go beyond itself and paint pictures or tell a story, has always been looked upon as a low form of musical art, while the opera is still hardly entirely admitted into the sacred precincts of the hall of tonal art.

ROSSINI AND HIS WORKS IN FRANCE

By J.-G. PROD'HOMME

A RECENT season furnished us the surprise of a Rossini Cycle including, besides "Le Barbier de Séville," two works unknown to modern amateurs and even to many musicians, "L'Italiana in Algeri" and "La Cenerentola." Several years ago, the "Petite Scène" revived one of the last theatrical works of the *maestro*, "Le Conte Ory," to the enchantment of the privileged audiences of M. Xavier de Courville. And on August 3rd, 1929—for the centennial of that opera, and likewise the centennial of Romanticism—the Opéra announced a revival of "Guillaume Tell" which did not take place. This sudden awakening of interest in the Swan of Pesaro—how long will it last? We shall not venture to prophesy, but it should be remembered that anything is possible in our epoch, which does not disdain the facile in art. One must also be able to command, in Paris, the services of artists like those (rare even in Italy) brought together in Turin by Guido M. Gatti, in order to attempt the revival of works so alien to modern practice.

Without vainly seeking to predict the future, it is our present aim to evoke, apropos of Rossini, the memory of a period long past, yet most brilliant, in our lyric annals; a period overshadowed and overwhelmed toward the end of the last century by Meyerbeerism, to begin with, and thereafter by Wagnerism and all that followed in its train. As Stendhal acutely remarks, in his "Vie de Rossini," "one very sad thing, which may derive from the nature of the case, is that the *beau idéal* changes every thirty years."¹ Even the history of French Opera teaches us that the grand periods in its annals are somewhat more extended, each "reign" having an average duration of fifty or sixty years: 1672, 1733, 1774, 1826, 1891—Lully, Rameau, Gluck, Rossini and Meyerbeer, followed by Wagner, in an almost regular rhythm. To-day, as in 1730, in 1774, in 1825 or in 1890, we have arrived at a new critical date. Who will present us with a new *beau idéal*?

¹Stendhal, "Vie de Rossini" (Paris, 1824, Introduction, p. 12). Later in the same volume he writes: "So far as I can judge, at the end of every period (and each of them lasts some twelve or fifteen years, the time that a composition remains in fashion)—at the end of every period, I say, there is a general belief that the time is ripe for revolution. As for myself, I am the dupe of a magician who bestowed the liveliest delights on my early youth. . . . I denounce myself as a Rossinist of 1815" (pp. 152-3).

Rossini became known in France quite naturally through the Théâtre-Italien. At the Académie Royale de Musique the epoch of Spontini (a transitional era succeeding the reign of Gluck), the historical opera, the grand spectacular or, in a word, romantic opera was gradually relegating to the archives the scores of Gluck with their classicism *à la* Louis XVI. As under the Regency, and as in our own day, the repertory was inflated by interpolating between these moribund tragedies certain modish ballets whose vogue was sometimes ephemeral, but which caught the fancy of audiences wearied by the sublimely emotional, who left much to be desired in the way of classical education. The Opera sought a savior; and it was an Italian who came forward to make away with the Bohemian Gluck and his successors.

Like that Germanic Orpheus, Rossini was destined to finish his career in the service of the Académie Royale de Musique. His Parisian period coincides with the epoch of the Restoration, while Gluck's last period paralleled the reign of Louis XVI.

Before the first performance of *L'Italiana in Algeri* at the Salle Favart in the last year of Mme. Catalani's directorate (Feb. 1, 1817), pieces written by Rossini, "brought out by amateurs eager for progress, enchanted the salons."¹ This *opera buffa* of Rossini was staged rather poorly, although Mme. Pasta was included in the cast, and at the outset attained only eleven performances. It was played to nearly empty houses, and had to wait four years for a revival; its effect on the whole, was very slight, and—as Imbert de Laphalèque recalled later—"certain hearers who discovered in Rossini a prodigious talent," were taxed with extravagance and "were pointed out with fingers."²

The anonymous "X" of the "Journal des Débats" (Hoffmann, perhaps?) devoted a small column in his little feuilleton of February 3rd to this "Italiana"—which he took to be Rossini's firstling opera. After dismissing the libretto as absurd, he goes on to say:

The music is the first effort of Signor Rossini, who was but seventeen at the time of his musical début. At the present time M. Rossini enjoys a great reputation in Rome and throughout Italy, and that is proof that this first effort is not his chief work. The second act is absolutely null and void. . . . The finale [of Act I] is a trifle *baroque* in style, but very gay and very original. Mme. Morandi had not entirely recovered from a recent indisposition; the choruses showed a sad lack of drill. It is to be hoped that other works of M. Rossini will enable us to give a more favorable estimate of the talent of this modern composer.

¹L. Quicherat, "Adolphe Nourrit" (Paris, 1867), I, p. 24.

²In the "Revue de Paris" for September, 1829.

Nevertheless, these eleven performances had sufficed to unloose a polemical flood, if not a new musical war; for, despite the slight liberty permitted the press, the subjects open for discussion were more various under Louis XVIII than under Louis XVI.

According to Fétis, whose opinion nearly coincides with that of his colleague, this opera never wholly recovered from its initial misadventure.

Either we were not habituated to the new style of music that it announced, or we were more shocked by its weak points than satisfied by the beauties to be found in it; certain it is that there was then only a very small number of performances which left only unfavorable impressions on the minds of amateurs of music.¹

"*L'Inganno felice*," which followed the "*Italiana*" in the theatre at Paris,² met with no better success; to these two unfruitful attempts must undoubtedly be attributed the slight interest shown by the inhabitants of this city for the music of Rossini,³ until the advent of the "*Barber*," which converted their indifference into enthusiasm.³

Rossini was twenty-six years of age when, near the end of July, 1818, "*Le Moniteur*" published the following news-item:

It is reported from Naples, under date of July 9, that a rumor had been circulated there of the death of Rossini, one of the most celebrated of contemporary Italian composers. Happily, this rumor, occasioned by a serious illness of M. Rossini, has been repudiated; he is, in fact, out of danger.⁴

Just then the ill-starred directorate of Mme. Catalani had come to an end, and the Italians were gathered into the Opéra under the unique direction of Persuis. "Three months were passed," says Albert Soubies, "in signing engagements, in preparing a homogeneous troupe, in bringing together such artists as Garcia (whose demands were enormous), Barilli, Bordogni, Graziani, Pellegrini, Mme. Mainvielle-Fodor;⁵ the reopening took place on March 20, 1819, and it was Garcia, one of the original cast in "*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*" at Rome in 1816, who likewise introduced

¹Revived in 1821, the "*Italiana*" disappeared for good from the repertory in 1866, after 133 performances. At the Teatro de Torino it was given four times in 1929.

²First performance May 13, 1819; 44 down to 1828.

³"*Revue musicale*" for December, 1827, t. II, p. 446.

⁴"*Le Moniteur*" for July 29, 1818.

⁵Soubies, "*Le Théâtre-Italien de 1801 à 1913*" (Paris, 1913), p. 16.

it to the Parisian stage. Persuis had then been succeeded by the great violinist Viotti (October 30, 1819-21). Persuis, the musical director for several years, had put off as long as he could the arrival of Rossini, whose triumph he foresaw; by underhand manœuvres he had sought to vitiate the success of this score,¹ which was brought out for the first time on October 26, 1819, interpreted by de Begnis, Graziani, Pellegrini, Garcia, and Mme. Ronzi-de Begnis. The reception of this première, which, according to Castil-Blaze, "felt the ill effects of articles published by stupid journalists" (who in Paris as in Rome tried to frustrate the new "Barbiere" by contrasting it with that of Paisiello, familiar in Paris since 1789), "was very cool. Mme. Ronzi-de Begnis, it is true, was lukewarm in the rôle of Rosina, for which her talent was insufficient."² She was replaced on Dec. 14, by Mme. Fodor, and by the end of the month the opera arrived at its tenth performance; in 1820 it was given thirty times, in 1821, twenty-four; the total down to 1914, in Italian, was 573, of which three were at the Opéra in 1912, and eleven at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in 1913; and there were six in the month of June, 1929, on the latter stage.

All formulas of laudation have been exhausted on this chef-d'œuvre; it was admired by Beethoven, who said to Rossini, "Above all, make much of the 'Barbiere'."³ Berlioz esteemed him no less, although in his youth he did not at all like "that clown, Rossini," and, regarding certain of his works, concurred in the opinion of M. Ingres: "This is the music of an insincere man."⁴

The work with which this musician is identified, so to speak, in the eyes of posterity, exasperated the anti-Rossinists of Paris. It may be that Paër staged it with regret, but he was not in a position to express it publicly. Berton, of the Institut, did not need so much circumspection; dubbing Rossini "il signor Vaccarmini," he raised a scandalous hue and cry (say the Escudier brothers), pushing his temerity to the point of writing that "the new Messiah of Italy was simply a charlatan, that his works were bare of common sense." The author of "Montano et Stephanie"

¹Castil-Blaze, "L'Opéra-Italien de 1548 à 1856" (Paris, 1856), p. 385.

²Pétis, whose notices may be found in his "Biographie universelle des musiciens" (Vol. VI, p. 404, foot-note), on the contrary, defends Paër in the article quoted from his "Revue musicale" for Dec., 1827 (p. 447, foot-note). It was Paër, he says, who saved the "Barbiere" from the outrage of a fiasco by skillful negotiations between Mmes. de Begnis and Mainvielle-Fodor.

³E. Michotte, "La Visite de R. Wagner à Rossini" (at Paris in 1860) (Paris, 1906), p. 32.

⁴Hector Berlioz, "Mémoires," Ch. XIV, pp. 48-9.

vented his pedantic ill-humor in "l'Abeille," and was soundly castigated therefor by the Rossinian editor of the "Miroir."

Among the leading journals "Le Moniteur" contented itself with remarking that "the compatriots of signor Rossini are very likely in the right." This was not compromising.—The "Journal de Paris" at first reported a flattering success, but in a second article on October 28 expressed the wish that Paisiello's "Barber" might "resume its rightful place" and say to that of Rossini, "Make way for your master!"—The anonymous critic of the "Débats" in like manner compared the two operas and desired the return of the elder, which, after some few cuts in the recitatives, would score a triumph for Paisiello over his competitor, a triumph "not more assured than brilliant. Happily, M. Rossini, to console himself for his defeat, could recall what Æneas said to Turnus: *Æneæ magni dextra cadis!* (Thou fallest by the hand of the great Æneas!)"¹

In one journal intermittently in opposition, "Le Censeur européen," the future historian Augustin Thierry joined the ranks of the musical oppositionists. Reproaching Italy for forsaking "her earlier idols" in favor of a youthful living composer who "does not fear to enter into competition with a man whom Italy has proclaimed as a musical genius" with this *Barbier*, "applauded from Milan to Naples," Augustin Thierry was struck by "formless sketches, a bizarre mixture of all imaginable styles, astonished to find themselves side by side—the vacillating melodies of Scotland, the severity of French airs, the uproar of German harmony, and now and then a few phrases of ill-developed Italian song—following each other precipitately like cloudlets of steam that rise only to vanish forthwith." And the young historian proceeds:

Rossini has added nothing to musical advancement. . . . He squanders his melody and harmony haphazard and without discernment, in a manner to please the ear, but also in such wise that while the ear is pleased the mind must remain a blank, so that intellectual disenchantment may not destroy the physical enjoyment. . . . Rossini does not propose to stir the emotions by his genius—he quite ignores the great secret of awakening interest by fugitive impressions on the ear. . . . He takes no account of the paramount passion. . . . Scenes of dissension, of surprise, of confusion, of uproar—on these he likes to expend his fervor. . . . His work is of slight interest. The boldness of his modulations, the singular originality of his orchestral passages, may divert for the moment, but nothing makes a permanent impression.

¹A large number of citations from the contemporary press may be found in Combarieu's "Histoire de la Musique" (Paris, 1913), Vol. II, pp. 496 *et seq.*

Amid the exaggerations some few acute observations are to be found in these lines, brought to light by Félix Delhasse.¹

Ten years after "Le Barbier," on the eve of "Guillaume Tell," Joseph d'Ortigue, the friend of Berlioz, also passed severe judgment (though guided by greater experience and competence) on the "new art" ("l'art nouveau"), in his "Guerre des Dilettanti." A new style was demanded. "It was necessary," he says "to make art more accessible rather than to simplify it; an author was needed who should be understood *instantanément*, without needing study. . . . His music requires forceful interpretation . . . it appeals only to the semi-learned; only such will remember a cavatina." His operas, continues d'Ortigue, lose much when executed on the piano. And comparing him (as did Stendhal) with Voltaire: "Rossini and Voltaire seem to have been made expressly for such minds as judge only by appearances."

After "Le Barbier"—which, despite the massed opposition of the conservatives, was to conquer all the lyric stages of Paris within a century,² as well as all those in the provinces, thanks to the adaptation by Castil-Blaze, in which, as in Mozart's "Nozze," the illustrious deranger borrowed the dialogue from Beaumarchais, and did not hesitate to arrange the score to suit his own taste—after the "Barbiere" the Italians first gave "Torvaldo e Dorliska" (Nov. 21, 1820), which had not been very successful in Italy ("un fiasco," Rossini reported to his mother). "Rossini," Fétis writes, "after the *reprise* in 1827, was evidently out of love with music while writing this opera," with its absurd libretto imitated from "Lodoïska." Two performances in 1820, and three in May, 1827, not (as Castil-Blaze avers) for the débuts of Marietta Garcia, the future Malibran, but for a Mme. Garzia, who had some success in it, were enough for the dilettanti. "La Pietra del Paragone" (April 5, 1821), more than one page of which Rossini utilized for "La Cenerentola," met with no better fortune during three evenings.

"Othello" (June 5, 1821), which did not disappear from the repertory till 1877, occasioned a lively discussion between Berton, in "l'Abeille," and the editor of "Le Miroir," who thought Rossini "more dramatic than Mozart [*sic*], as Voltaire is more dramatic

¹Delhasse, "Augustin Thierry, critique musical" ("Chronique musicale," Aug. 1, 1875, pp. 223-4).

²"Le Barbier de Séville" was produced once (fragmentarily) at the Opéra on Dec. 9, 1853. In the adaptation by Castil-Blaze, known solely in France, it appeared at the Odéon on May 6, 1824; at the Théâtre-Lyrique from Sept. 28, 1851 to 1856, at first, then in 1858, and from 1868-70; it appeared at the Athénée, Sept. 20, 1873, and did not reach the Opéra-Comique until Nov. 8, 1884, where it had 204 performances down to the end of 1893; plus 157 thereafter till August, 1914. It has also been played at the Théâtre lyrique de la Gaité, and is at present on the repertory of the Trianon lyrique.

than Racine, despite and perhaps because of the rare perfection that distinguishes the style of the suave flatterer of Louis XIV. . . . To the brilliant Rossini what is most certainly his due: vivacity of imagination, dramatic eloquence, truth of expression."¹ Berton, while according Rossini "brilliant imagination, spirit, originality, great fecundity," criticizes him especially for certain lapses from correctness, "and, whatever some persons may say, purity of style is not to be disdained, and mistakes in the syntax of the language in which one writes are never excusable. M. Rossini knows all this, and that is why I venture to say it here. . . . This composer is, beyond question, the most brilliant talent that Italy has produced since Cimarosa; but one may deserve to be called a celebrity, and still not reach the stature of a Mozart"² (to whom Rossini's admirers were continually comparing the *maestro*).

The anonymous editor of "Le Miroir" responded next day that the public, who came to the theatre only in search of pleasure "take good care not to affront a composer who pleases them because of pretended infractions of the rules of the Conservatoire and the theoretical objections of professors." Even admitting that Rossini merited all the dispraise of which he was the object, "it is demonstrated, as a matter of fact, that the scores of this celebrated composer are more graphic, more expressive, more popular, than those of the most renowned masters. That is what I understand by the term dramatic; it is impossible to understand it otherwise. . . . In the music of Rossini there is an ineffable something of life and realism that is wanting in the splendors of Mozart. . . . In fact, there are only two kinds of music—music that pleases, and music that does not please."³

The final cause of a contention renewed in every period, is summarized in these last words. And Stendhal, whose worship of Mozart was allied with his admiration for Rossini, remarked somewhat later: "His music is eminently romantic, because it is calculated for our present needs"; it "is quite in harmony with the fine arrangement of the stages in Paris; in every imaginable sense it is music made expressly for France."

On the following 18th of September "La Gazza ladra" was brought out (and contributed 230 Italian performances down to 1858), "one of the most delightful, most dramatic, most original scores that we have heard hitherto in the Théâtre-Italien,"

¹"Le Miroir," June 6, 1821.

²"L'Abeille," Aug. 4, 1821. Letter from Berton, cited by Stendhal, p. 125.

³"Le Miroir," July 28, 1821.

affirms an "Old Melomaniac" in a Letter Concerning Music in "Le Miroir" of April 12, 1822. After this, on June 8, 1822, came "La Cenerentola," the eighth work by Rossini to be played in Paris. It was his last *opera buffa*, and his best, according to the dilettanti, who nevertheless found fault with him for inserting numerous pages taken from earlier scores. None the less, the critic of "Le Moniteur" descried in it the brilliant imagination of the composer, "who seems to improvise rather than compose, and who is able by turns, and with much the same means, to be lively, humorous, touching and pathetic."¹

"Tancredi," "a parody of one of our most affecting tragedies; . . . a wretched profanation" of Voltaire's "Tancrède," was brought out a little earlier, on April 23, 1822. To "Le Miroir" the music appeared "greatly inferior to that of his 'Otello,' as regards either the charm of the motives or the depth and truth of expression." The rôle of the protagonist, a travesty despite the talent of Mme. Pasta, was also an obstacle to the success of the work: "A Paris audience will never lend itself to seeing a hero personified by a woman just because she has donned a toga or buckled on a cuirass."²

"Tancredi" was speedily followed by another *opera seria* (or, rather, an *operatorio*), "Mose in Egitto" (Oct. 20, 84 performances down to 1835), which was taken over by the Opéra five years later. We are acquainted with Balzac's enthusiastic analysis of it in his little romance, "Maximillia Doni" (1839).

With "Il Turco in Italia" (33 performances in two years, starting with May 23, 1820), and *Elisabetta*, first played on the stage of the Opéra on March 10, 1822, for the benefit of Mme. Mainvielle-Fodor (6 performances in all, in 1822 and 1829), the Parisians had made the acquaintance of a dozen of the *maestro's* works by the time he came in person to Paris. In January, 1822, a letter from Naples announced that he intended to go to London after the Carnival and, on returning, to visit Paris, "where he would like to remain permanently. He would prefer [so the

¹"Le Moniteur," June 10, 1822.

²"Le Miroir," April 25, 1822. Next month (May 27) the "Old Melomaniac" remarked regarding "Tancredi": "It is a concert-score. This must not be taken for a disparaging criticism. What do we, in fact, demand of Italian music if not that it should, above all, please us? Assuredly, it is not tragedy that our audiences habitually seek in an *opera seria*. Let us admit that if Otello is fine on the stage, the score of 'Tancredi' does good service on the piano." This letter was followed by an advertisement of Pacini's offering the score for sale at the price of 25 francs, besides the portraits of Rossini and the Pasta (a franc apiece). And it adds: "The dilettanti, who might hesitate between the *giovini di gran genio* and the lovely face of the cantatrice who interprets his melodies so happily, may solve the difficulty by taking both pictures."

letter proceeded] to work in future only for Paris, where the superiority of execution and the exquisite taste of the public could alone lend real value to the success of an author."¹ The trip was delayed until 1823. He was engaged (together with his wife, the cantatrice Colbran) after the Congress at Verona to go to London, under most favorable auspices, and set out in October, arriving in Paris the evening of November 9th.

This first sojourn of Rossini's in Paris is known to us in every detail.² It lasted four weeks, till December 7th. He lodged next to the old Opéra (in what is to-day the Place Louvois), in the rue Rameau, in the home of his compatriot Biagioli, the learned commentator of Dante; this was his sole acquaintance in Paris with the exception of the youthful Panseron, who had studied at Bologna under Mattei. On the 11th, Rossini visited the Théâtre-Italien, the "Barbieri" being given with Pellegrini, Graziani, Profesi and Mlle. Mori in the cast. After the performance, during which the *maestro* had been the object of interminable ovations, besides being dragged onto the stage, he was serenaded by the musicians at a late hour in front of his dwelling. Two days thereafter he showed himself at the Opéra, where—a meagre entertainment!—they gave Rousseau's "Le Devin du Village" and a ballet; but four days later he went to hear an act or two of "Fernand Cortez," by Spontini. He also heard "Otello" at the Salle Louvois, played on the 25th at a benefit for Garcia, between whom and Mme. Pasta he was acclaimed on the stage. But the most curious episode during this visit to Paris was the banquet arranged in his honor on November 16th at the restaurant of Le Veau Qui Tette, Place du Châtelet. Friendly journals did their utmost to foment enthusiasm, and one hundred and fifty guests responded to their appeal. Among them were noted Mlle. Mars and Mme. Pasta on the right and left of the master, Mmes. Georges, Grassari, Cinti and Meric. Lesueur presided, having on his right Mme. Rossini-Colbran. Also present were Talma, Boieldieu, Garcia, Martin, Auber, Hérold, the scene-painter Ciceri, Panseron, Casimir Bonjour, Horace Vernet and other "dilettantes de guinguette" (pothouse dilettanti), as the legitimist "Quotidienne" disdainfully remarked. Poems were read, toasts were drunk, fragments from Rossini, Gluck, Grétry and Mozart were heard at intervals, and, "for a finish," the "Buona sera" from "Il Barbieri," all conducted

¹"Le Miroir," Jan. 16, 1822, letter from M. G. D., "a young musician of great talent, at present sojourning in Naples," dated Dec. 21, 1821.

²Cf. Adolphe Jullien, "Paris dilettante au commencement du siècle" (Paris, 1884), Scribe et Rossini, pp. 67 et seq.

by the clarinettist and publisher Gambaro. A medal was engraved in commemoration of this memorable manifestation, which was ridiculed by the anti-Rossini press, and made into a vaudeville by Scribe and Mazère.

Rossini had not yet taken leave of Paris when, on Nov. 29 at the Gymnase, they brought out "Le grand Dîner ou Rossini à Paris," quite aptly staged in one act and presenting, near the Barrière de Charenton, the innkeeper Biffsteakini, his daughter Madeleine (Mlle. Déjazet), in love with a former pupil of the Conservatoire, Giraud (supposed to be Rossini), an amateur Trombonini, *et al.* Understanding the spiteful intent, the final vaudeville (to the air *Tra la la*) brings about the happy ending. Madeleine sings:

Chez vingt peuples différents,
Vous qui cherchez des talents,
Messieurs, qu'avez-vous besoin
D' en aller chercher si loin?
Restez donc! (*bis*)
Eh, messieurs, où courez-vous?
Restez donc! (*bis*)
Vous les trouverez chez vous.

And Trombonini:

Lorsque vous avez Talma,
Surtout lorsque Mars est là,
Vous regrettez, bon public,
Monsieur Kean, monsieur Garrick.
Restez donc! . . . (etc.)

Biffsteakini ends with the indispensable banter:

Braves bourgeois, bons maris,
Qui le dimanche à Paris
Chez Molière vous pressez
Pour voir les maris vexés,
Restez donc! (*bis*)
Pourquoi si loin courez-vous?
Restez donc! (*bis*)
Vous trouverez ça chez vous.

(Ye who seek for talents rare
Here and there and everywhere,
Pray, good sirs, why need you stray
In your zeal so far away?
Stray no more! (*bis*)
Wherefore rove the wide world thro'?
Stray no more! (*bis*)
Here at home you'll find them too.)

The Musical Quarterly

(While the Talma you can hear,
And our Mars without a peer,
Why repine that you've not seen
Mister Garrick, Mister Kean?

Take a rest! (*bis*)

Wherefore long for stranger guest?

Take a rest! (*bis*)

Here at home you'll find the best.)

(Loyal goodmen, who repair
On a Sunday to Molière,
Keen for him to show you vexed
Husbands by their wives perplexed,

What's the rush? (*bis*)

Not a step you have to roam!

What's the rush? (*bis*)

You can find them right at home.)

While they were thus innocently singing his dispraises, Rossini (to whom, by the way, Scribe had shown his worklet) received from M. de Lauriston, chamberlain of the Maison du Roi (royal household), certain offers, which he rejected. Not wishing to displace anyone, either in the Conservatoire, or in the Théâtre-Italien, or in the Royal Chapel, he nevertheless craved a title and the emoluments thereto appertaining.¹ So it came that on Dec. 1, he himself addressed to the chamberlain a plan for an engagement in which he proposed (1) that he should compose an opera for the Académie Royale de Musique, reserving for himself the choice of libretto and enjoyment of author's rights; (2) to compose an *opera semi-seria* for the Théâtre-Italien, and to produce another already played elsewhere; (3) to stage for his own benefit an Italian opera and a ballet to be selected by himself; and (4), "M. Rossini will engage to fulfill whatever functions His Majesty may see fit to honor him with by attaching him to His service." (For "whatever functions" read "whatever sinecures.") He thought, besides, "that he might be allowed the sum of four thousand francs, to be apportioned, according to the will and pleasure of His Excellency, either as payment for his works, or as appointments attached to the functions wherewith he might be charged." This project, which evidently was only the conclusion of private conversations, had for sequel, during Rossini's sojourn in London "at the hotel of the French Embassy in London, Feb. 27, 1824" (as stated over the signatures), an agreement in four articles in conformity with the desiderata of the *maestro*. By royal rescript of the following

¹Escudier frères, "Rossini" (Paris, 1854), p. 183.

26th of November (date of Duplantys' engagement at the Opéra) he was appointed to conduct the music and the orchestra at the Italiens with a salary of 20,000 francs yearly, beginning on December 1st, and agreed to compose "such works as should be required of him, either for the Italian Opera or for the French Opéra, at the rate of five thousand francs for those in one act, and ten thousand francs for those in more than one act."

This nomination did not fail to provoke a certain resistance. Paër, infuriated, sent in his resignation, only to retract it forthwith. And the "Almanach Royal" for 1825 listed him in the secondary capacity of assistant-conductor, to reinstate him in 1827 at the head of the personnel. In the meantime the Italiens (in consequence of an exchange authorized by a decree of June 21, 1826) had removed from the Salle Louvois and reoccupied the Salle Favart (site of the present Opéra-Comique).

During these two years of his conductorship, which were not very brilliant financially for the theatre, Rossini revived most of his works already known to Paris, with an excellent troupe comprising Mmes. Mainvielle-Fodor, Mombelli and Pasta, Messrs. Bordogni, Galli, Pellegrini, Donzelli, Rubini (newly arrived), etc.¹

As Director of Music and Composer to His Majesty, Rossini composed, for the occasion of the anointment of Charles I, a short occasional piece, "Il Viaggio a Reims, ossia l'Albergo del giglio d'oro," wherein figured representatives of five nations, singing their national hymns, with a little ballet, a clarinet-duo executed by Gambaro and Beer, etc. Transported by the court to Louvois, this "Journey to Reims" survived only three performances (June 29, 1835). "Le Globe" opined that the music was "a too faithful repetition of favorite phrases and orchestral effects to which the first operas of M. Rossini owed their success. This composer has a habit of repeating the same piece five or six times. Such repetitions are doubtless pleasing to himself, but it would seem that the public of Louvois do not share his affection. . . . May we dare to hope that the operas promised us by M. Rossini will be superior to the 'Viaggio?'"—Out of this same occasional piece Rossini was soon to evolve "Le Comte Ory."—While awaiting its appearance at the Opéra, the director of the Italiens brought out his "Semiramide" (Dec. 8), which, by the end of 1826, attained its twentieth

¹Of 174 performances in 1825, Rossini claimed no less than 129 for his own works, i.e., ten out of twenty operas on the repertory; in 1826, with twelve operas, 114 evenings out of 145; in 1832, with eight operas out of sixteen, 119 evenings out of 154. In 1839 he still held first place, but with only 33 performances of five operas. (A. Soubies, "Le Théâtre-Italien," p. 110 and accompanying illustrations.)

performance.¹ "Semiramide" (libretto by Rossi, after Voltaire), his last work written in Italian, was held to be one of the most characteristic operas of his "second period." "Zelmira" followed (March 14, 1826; libretto by Tottola, after du Belloy; fifteen performances down to 1831). A quotation from Stendhal will suffice to show the impression made by "Semiramide" on the contemporary world:

The degree of Germanism in "Zelmira" is as nothing in comparison with "Semiramide," produced at Venice in 1828. It strikes me that Rossini made a geographical mistake. This opera, which escaped a hissing in Venice solely because of Rossini's great name, might possibly have seemed sublime at Königsberg or Berlin; I can easily console myself for not having seen it in the theatre; what I have heard sung at the piano gave me no pleasure whatever. [And, a few lines further:] Rossini will finish by being more German than Beethoven.²

Let us note that "Semiramide" was played a week before Boieldieu's "La Dame blanche," this furnishing Berton with a pretext for republishing his pamphlet "De la musique mécanique et la musique philosophique" (On mechanical music and philosophical music), dating from 1821, following it up with an "Épître à un célèbre compositeur français" (Letter to a celebrated French composer—namely, Boieldieu). Herein he passed in review, with sustained admiration, the earlier masters of the French School, and

¹Stendhal, "Vie de Rossini," p. 503. "*Sémiramis*, a German opera," he says later, on p. 545.—And Castil-Blaze observes: "It is true, that this blunder is not original with Beyle-Stendhal, but with Carpani, from whom it was copied." ("Le Théâtre-Italien," p. 433.)

²Weber, as we know, was in Paris during the last four days of February, 1826. Rossini did not care for him; he said (if we may believe Berlioz) that Weber's music "gave him the colic." Charles-Maurice, in his "Courrier des Théâtres," wrote: "M. Marie Weber, the author of 'Robin des Bois' (not including the poem), recently arrived in Paris. Will M. Rossini permit him to stage his work? No! Do people like him, this M. Rossini? Same answer." However, as M. Adolphe Jullien remarks, Maurice would speak well of Weber only to belittle Rossini, and spoke ill of Rossini only because the latter turned a deaf ear to him. As for that, he attacked him every morning, and Rossini would not have been the last to laugh at entremets like the following:

"March 4.—M. Rossini draws his pay for February."

"March 5.—In 27 days M. Rossini will draw his pay for March." (Ad. Jullien, "Paris dilettante," pp. 45-6.)

The two opposites met, and Rossini recalled with emotion, during his conversation with Wagner in 1860, this interview of thirty-four years earlier. Weber paid Rossini this visit to request letters of introduction for London. "He came to me," said Rossini, "in a pitiable state, with a livid complexion, emaciated, afflicted with the dry cough of consumptives . . . and limping; it hurt me to see him. . . . I was aghast at the idea of his undertaking such a journey. I dissuaded him from it most energetically, saying that he would commit a crime . . . suicide! All in vain. He answered me: 'I know it will cost me my life. But, I must. I have to bring out 'Oberon'; my contract demands it, and I must, I must.'—My heart bled for him as, for the last time, I embraced this great genius, with a presentiment that I should never see him again. It was only too true. *Povero Weber!*" (E. Michotte, "La visite de R. Wagner à Rossini" [at Paris in 1860]; Paris, 1906, pp. 23-4.)



Monsieur Charles Gilbert Martin

Je vous autorise à publier dans le journal Le Philologue ma caricature
 dans le but de voir reproduire les traits du Picciotto de Paris par un bon
 ouvrier d'opéra. Tout est dans la main de l'homme du bon pays, respectable
 étranger.
 G. Rossini

A Caricature of Rossini by Charles Gilbert Martin, with Rossini's Autograph Expressing his Approval.



—without mentioning the name of Rossini—closed with the following quip. Asking Maelzel, the inventor of the metronome, if he could “construct a machine capable of composing music”—“Yes (he represents the famous mechanician as replying), I could make one fit to compose music like that of MM. XXX, but which could not produce anything resembling the works of Mozart, or Cimarosa, or Sacchini, etc.; such skill was not granted me”:

Mon art n'y peut prétendre,
A la divinité seule appartient ce droit.

(Thereto my art may not pretend,
To divinity alone such power is given.)

The versified letter to Boieldieu begins with this fine line:

Eh quoi! tu veux briser ta lyre?
(How now! wouldst rend thy lyre in twain?)

and ends with the sage advice:

Crois-moi donc, laisse dire,
Cher ami, laisse écrire,
Et reprend, reprend ta lyre!

(Friend, believe me, let them say,
Let them write whate'er they may:
Take, ah take thy lyre again!)

All this made very little impression, nor did it prevent Rossini from pursuing his plans. He remained hardly two years at the Théâtre-Italien as general director and conductor of the music, having as assistant Paër, who resumed the full directorship in 1827; his stage-manager was Severini, who did not vanish from the scene until 1838, when the Salle Favart burned down.

* *

*

It was then that Rossini, in conformity with the agreement made with the “Maison du Roi,” brought out his first work at the Opéra. “It was, we should say, with this victorious entry into the time-honored house of Lully, of Rameau, of Gluck, and of Spon-tini,” says Albert Soubies, “that a certain epoch begins, doubtless announced in some measure by the success of ‘Fernand Cortez,’ but now assuming its most marked and precise characteristics.”¹

This was in 1826. The awakening of Greece had aroused the sympathies of all Europe. In its support, theatrical performances were

¹Soubies, “69 ans à l'Opéra” (Paris, 1893, pp. 3-4).

given; the élite of Parisian society had assembled at Wauxhall, under Rossini's management, for an extremely brilliant concert which netted a receipt of 20,000 francs. For the Opéra an occasional piece was demanded. Rossini, with the coöperation of Soumet, adapted for the French stage his "*Maometto secondo*," which, adorned with fresh beauties (a *finale* and an entire act had been added), became "*Le Siège de Corinthe*."¹

The manuscript of the libretto (in which the name of Soumet had been substituted for that of Guiraud) was submitted to the censors early in May and *visé* on the 11th, which would seem to indicate that the première was imminent;² but, perhaps for political reasons, the première did not take place until October 9, with Nourrit, Derivis père, Mlle. Cinti, *et al.*

The historic-romantic coloration of the work, and the conditions obtaining at the time of its production, rendered this début of Rossini at the Académie Royale de Musique a sensational event at which none of the dilettanti could fail to assist.

In the critique that Lajarte devoted to this work, he notes first of all that it was reproduced as "*Mahomet II*" (as may still be read on the orchestral parts and on the manuscript submitted to the censors):

The success of the first performance was immense; the superb scene of the "consecration of the banners" aroused an enthusiasm which has been maintained ever since. Derivis, on leaving the stage, tripped and fell so unfortunately that the second performance had to be delayed for some days. To the twenty-seventh performance a ballet was added, and the work held a place in the repertory down to June 1, 1844.³

It furnished 105 performances (no less than 35 in 1827). Like most of the larger works, and especially those of Rossini, "*Le Siège de Corinthe*" was frequently given in fragmentary form; at the revival on Jan. 11, 1836, after only five performances, Acts II and III alone were given (from June 22 to July 8); the ephemeral revival of 1844 consisted of one performance of Act III and three uncurtailed performances. Thus the grand triumph of 1827 found its definitive ending.

¹L. Quicherat, "*Adolphe Nourrit*," I, p. 37, foot-note.

²"Archives nationales," F 18, 669. This copy bears the title: "*Mahomet 2, ou le Siège de Corinthe, opéra en trois actes traduit de l'Italien par M. (Guiraud) Soumet*." The Italian librettist was Balocchi. The censors had required only three corrections. They struck out the word *liberté* in this line for Adraste: "*La liberté n'est plus qu'au fond de ces tombeaux*" (Within these tombs alone can liberty be found); this entire line in the rôle of Nécclès: "*Laisseras-tu triompher le Croissant?*" (Wilt thou allow the triumph of the Crescent?); and this one, sung by Hiérax: "*Liberté! tous nos fils se lèvent en ton nom!*" (Liberty! all our sons rise in thy name!)

³Th. de Lajarte, "*Bibliothèque musicale de l'Opéra*," II, p. 124.

"Le Moniteur" had welcomed it with a warmth quite out of the ordinary, as we are informed by Quicherat:

We have reported [writes the editor of the official journal] the enthusiasm that followed the performance, the acclamations calling for the author, his modest refusal to appear, his hasty exit. For this we venture to censure him. The acclaim did not apply solely to the author of "*Le Siège de Corinthe*," it had a wider scope. If we rightly interpret the intention of the audience, they desired once for all to acquit themselves of what they felt to be their debt to the great artist to whom they had in fact been owing, for twelve years, such delightful and varied diversion.

It seems to us that the success of "*Le Siège de Corinthe*" should be, above all, considered from the point of view that it was a pledge of good faith, on the part of Rossini, towards the French stage. We demand—and we have no hesitation in saying it—we demand from him a work composed in every sense for us, one that we can appropriate like those of the great foreign masters who preceded Rossini in this capacity, and who, by virtue of their masterworks, are naturalized Frenchmen.¹

The same journal subsequently reported that, on that very evening, the orchestra gathered below Rossini's windows to give him a serenade "composed of such numbers from his operas as could be executed in this improvised concert."

Vitet, in "*Le Globe*," likewise recalled Rossini's agreement to compose a French opera.

But some modest hesitation or other has held him back; he has taken alarm at sight of the long procession of our neutral, guttural and nasal syllables, so that he did not care to attempt anything before taking, as it were, a short course of gymnastics in our language. ("*Le Globe*," Oct. 12, 1826.)

Rossini, however, had another problem to solve:

¹"*Le Moniteur universel*," Oct. 11, 1826. Rossini then had lodgings quite near the Opéra, at 10 boulevard Montmartre, a large building through whose site the Passage Jouffroy was opened in 1845. Boieldieu was living there, and Carafa also, and Kreubé, conductor of the orchestra at the Opéra-Comique. While very cordial relations subsisted, on the surface, between Rossini and Boieldieu, the author of "*La Dame blanche*" was thought to be jealous of his neighbor. In a letter to Charles Maurice, dated Dec. 16, 1823, he wrote to that celebrated master-singer: "I am just as wild over Rossini as all the blatant fanatics, and it is because I really love Rossini and cannot bear to see how his style is abused by wretched imitators. . . . This style is inimitable; one must either steal it outright, or hold one's peace." Two years later, on Jan. 26, 1826, Boieldieu again wrote Maurice: "They say that I am no stranger to the little attacks directed against Rossini. You know, as regards those emanating from yourself, whether that is true. . . . I do not know what you have against him, and do not wish to know. But if it depended on me to reconcile you, I assure you that I should neglect no means to that end. And you ought to know why. I am allied with him; perhaps not so closely as to be sure that he will fully appreciate my character, but sufficiently to desire that our friendly relations may continue. We are living in the same house, and visit each other; . . . that should be more than enough to make you understand my desire, and besides, you know how I am." (Ch. Maurice, "*Histoire anecdotique du Théâtre*," Paris, 1856, pp. 312 and 368.)

Were the singers of the grand Opéra capable of singing his music? The response to this second query was yet more dubious than that to the first; but the manner in which Mlle. Cinti and M. Adolphe Nourrit acquitted themselves should have completely reassured M. Rossini. ("Le Globe," Oct. 12, 1826.)

This first appearance of the *maestro* at the Opéra was, in fact, to signalize a musical revolution not merely in the repertory, but on the stage and in the orchestra. The singers habituated themselves to abstaining from the heavy recitative of French opera. A great artist like Adolphe Nourrit (whose father left the theatre after "Le Siège de Corinthe") was obliged to recommence his vocal studies from the ground up under Rossini himself, who in turn owed much to Nourrit as well as to Mlle. Cinti and Levasseur, both schooled in the Italian method and transplanted to the Académie Royale.

This event immediately furnished the pretext for a skit by Théaulon, Th. Anne and Lagny, entitled "Le Siège de l'Opéra, ou le Dilettante en déroute," lyric work in five parts sequent to "Le Siège de Corinthe," produced on Nov. 6 at the Vaudeville and played till the end of the year. The authors presented the following personages: A wealthy foreigner crazy for Italian music, Countess de Fugacinowski; *maestro* Bolaffi; Lavardière, a passionate dilettante; Mlle. Jacinthe, cancatrice; Prosper, a French composer, who in the end marries the godchild of Baron Rémival, who adores Rossini. Scene I shows the Baron at home having the libretto of the piece expounded to him by his barber, who confounds Greeks and Turks; next comes Café Torton; then rue Lepeletier crowded, as if in a riot, by the throng of would-be spectators; then the interior of two theatre boxes through which might be seen the stage of the Opéra, an ingenious device permitting a parody of the finale of Act II of "Le Siège de Corinthe"; finally, the salon of the Countess, through which stray a number of amateurs unable to get into the theatre (Lavardière himself was shut up in the police station during the performance). Naturally—as in "Le Dîner de Rossini" (1823)—the young French composer marries the godchild of Rémival; but *maestro* Bolaffi, in spite of being dubbed the "Basilio of dilettantism," comes off quite well. And Rossini could not fail to be satisfied with this "Siège de l'Opéra," which proved the importance attributed to his "Siège de Corinthe." This latter did not merely bring about a revolution in the rue Lepeletier, but brought in a new management, as well. At the end of 1826 Duplantys was returned to the direction of some work-house from which, it would appear, he had been summoned; and

Lubbert, leaving the Théâtre-Italien, was called to the Opéra, being installed the 12th of July, 1827. Here he found a second opera or, rather, oratorio by Rossini, *Moïse*, running since March 26, 1826. This "*Moïse et Pharaon, ou le Passage de la Mer rouge*," was a revised and amended version of "*Mosè in Egitto*" (1818); it contained an almost entirely new first act, and the finale of Act III and a soprano aria in Act IV had also been rewritten. Thus arranged, "*Moïse*" was one of the finest musical works in existence," according to Halévy.¹ Quicherat, gladly joining in its praises, recalled, forty years later, "the emotion and the transports of the audience during the celebrated finale; it is one of the most wonderful triumphs of music that I have ever witnessed. . . . The audience, in its frenzy, called loudly for the author of the music. Rossini, escorted to the stage by Nourrit and Dabadie, received a most enthusiastic ovation from the entire house."²

This enthusiasm found a responsive echo in the press and at succeeding performances, which numbered 32 the first year, 62 from 1827 to 1832, 54 from 1835 to 1841, 12 from 1843 to 1845, 25 from 1852-4, 1 in 1858, and 34 at the last revival 1863-5; in all 188, according to Soubies, but only 187 according to Lajarte.

The revolution so much desired, yet always put off, was imminent; finally, it is consummated:

. . . it was at last brought about yesterday with most complete success by the oratorio "*Moïse*." Rejoice in thy triumph, Rossini, it is well-deserved! [exclaimed Fétis]; thy sincere admirers can ask nothing more to enhance thy fame; those who envy and decry thee must give over an unequal contest in which there is not even a hope of rational resistance. The over-zealous partisans of *national glory* should in fact be grateful to thee, for thou hast just proved that in France we have singers who can sing—something that their *patriotism* has obstinately denied. (Fétis, "*Revue musicale*," March, 1827, I, p. 181.)

Nourrit, Levasseur (a deserter from the Théâtre-Italien), Dabadie, Alexis Dupont, Mmes. Cinti, Mori and Dabadie, had performed the work to perfection; the most unregenerate ears were fain to be seduced. "The conversion of the ultra-recalcitrants dates from the representation of '*Moïse*' [wrote Vitet]. . . . Down to the obscurest of bungling amateurs, who not long ago reviled the author of *Sémiramis*, there is not one who did not say, on hearing '*Moïse*': '*Mon Dieu! how beautiful!* But then, it is not Italian music!"³

¹F. Halévy, "*Derniers Portraits et Souvenirs*," p. 146.

²L. Quicherat, "*Adolphe Nourrit*," I, 44-5.

³"*Le Globe*," March 21, 1827.

All the same, this enthusiasm cooled, either because the work was found to be too severe in style, or for other reasons; at the revivals of 1835 and 1843 only a fragment of the opera-oratorio, the third act, was given.

In a curious brochure entitled "Manuscrit de 1905," which he published in 1827 under the pseudonym of Gabriel Fictor, Jal wrote:

Rossinism was a serious affair, a species of schism. Without intending it, the Italian master became the head of a party that signalized itself by its intolerance; happily, no blood flowed in this quarrel, a revival of that between the Piccinnists and the Gluckists; but floods of ink were spilled for and against Rossini. The aristocracy seized upon the musical opinion *à la mode*; and everybody in good society (an expression of an era of prejudices) occupied a box in the Théâtre des Bouffes, just as they showed themselves on the promenades of the Bois de Boulogne or at the sermons of Abbés Fayet and Bonnevie. . . . Rossini was dethroned for good in 1836 [so prophesies Jal-Fictor further on, who nevertheless was hardly able, in 1827, to foresee *Les Huguenots*]. A young German harmonist named Pittermann won the place he had long occupied in public esteem. This fortunate competitor made his début in 1833, and three years thereafter had eclipsed all his rivals. At the date of this writing (June 5, 1905) no memory remains in France of the compositions of Pittermann or Rossini, any more than of Mondonville's courantes and the chaconnes of Berton *père*. Their glorious names alone have come down to us.¹

To round out his prediction, Jal-Fictor makes Rossini director of the Conservatories of Paris and Naples, and lets him die at table "after having said grace; he was very old and very rich."

Rossini, who apparently cared little for these predictions, was at this time revising his score of "Le Comte Ory" to send in to Lubbert, now a devotee of the new ideas. The libretto was by Scribe and Delestre-Poirson after an "acte" by them played at the Gymnase in 1816, now developed into two acts for the Opéra. The first representation was given some eight months after that of the triumphant "Muette de Portici," by Auber, on Aug. 20, 1828.

Rossini's little work, of a medieval coloration typifying the era of Charles X, was admirably performed—although the frame of the Opéra seemed a little too large for it—by Mmes. Cinti-Damoreau and Jawureck, Adolphe Nourrit and Levasseur in the leading rôles; it was unanimously hailed as charming, and registered a fresh victory for Rossini on the stage of the Opéra. "The oftener one hears this music," wrote Vitet, "the greater the charm and

¹Gabriel Fictor (Jal), "Manuscrit de 1905," Paris, 1827, pp. 201-2.

beauty it discovers. Like everything that bears the stamp of true genius, it does not at first reveal itself in its entirety, and the treasures held in reserve are not the least precious. Hence, we gladly venture to prophesy, the success of "Le Comte Ory" will continually increase."¹

The prediction of the "Globe" critic did not prove false; for down to Oct. 28, 1865, 383 performances were given in the old Salle Lepeletier; and the revival on Oct. 29, 1880, at the new Opéra, under Vaucorbeil's direction, of a work that could serve as a curtain-raiser for the ballets, added 48 more performances in five years. The leading interpreters at this revival were Dereims, Boudouresque, Melchissédec, Mlle. Darem (later de Vère), and Janvier. The effect was mediocre. "It seems to us," concluded Noël and Stoullig, "that too much seriousness presided over the interpretation of this work. Too great thought is given to the gravity of the locale, and too little to the levity of the work."²

"Le Comte Ory" finished its career on Jan. 18, 1884, reappearing only in the performances at the Petite Scène in 1926.

This eclectic work, wherein Rossini incorporated certain numbers from his "Viaggio a Reims," shows the influence not only of the French environment, but also of Beethoven, whose scores he was studying, it is said, under Habeneck, then chef d'orchestre at the Opéra and of the new Société des Concerts.³

"Whatever this extraordinary composer may do, he will conceive nothing more beautiful than 'Moïse,'" declared Fétis, while deploring that in "Le Comte Ory" Rossini showed himself "more enamored of the forms of his earliest manner than in his latest works. Here the crescendos, the cabalettes, the symmetrical repetitions of phrases, are too much in evidence." Still, the

¹"Le Globe," Aug. 23, 1828. Berlioz, five years later, again wrote: "What a charming score is that of 'Le Comte Ory!' what fancy, what an abundance of melodies, what *esprit*! And, in many scenes, what refinement of dramatic intuition! Certain persons may opine that no choice can be made in this particular. Unfortunately, an attentive critic is unable to share their opinion." ("Le Monde dramatique," July, 1835, p. 149.)

²Ed. Noël and Ed. Stoullig, "Annales du Théâtre et de la Musique," 1880 (Paris 1881, p. 47).

³Habeneck, at the head of the Société du Conservatoire, had given his first concert on March 8, 1828. (Cf. my work on "Les Symphonies de Beethoven.") Rossini was even said to have introduced Beethoven to France. In a recent work on Julius Stockhausen (Frankfort, 1927), page 9, one Fräulein Kestner writes to F. Anton Stockhausen in November, 1861: "After reading to-day in the *Augsburger Zeitung* that Rossini had made every effort to induce Habeneck to bring out the C-minor Symphony in the concerts of the Conservatoire, and had met with success, to the honor of them both, I recalled how you, dear Herr Stockhausen, had given me a very different version of the affair. Was it not yourself who made people down there acquainted with Beethoven?" —Schindler, in his "Beethoven in Paris," makes no mention of either of these conflicting claims.

learned critic noticed in this score "a prodigious variety of effects, of novel and piquant devices of instrumentation, and of elegant combinations," but no new ideas. "It is always Rossini."¹

Meanwhile, Rossini was working on his "Guillaume Tell," which was destined to transcend all the hopes of the dilettanti, all the prognostications of the augurs. Translated not long before by Barante, Schiller's "Wilhelm Tell" was an inspiration for dramaturgists and librettists. In his "l'Histoire par le Théâtre" (Paris, 1865, II, pp. 292-3) Théodore Muret writes:

On our stages the tide was running for peoples in arms against tyranny. After "Masaniello"² and "La Muette," it was the turn for "Guillaume Tell." In swift succession we saw, in 1828, the revival of the "Guillaume Tell" of Sedaine and Grétry at the Opéra-Comique,³ and a "Guillaume Tell" by Pixérécourt at the Gaité. The Swiss hero even figured at the Vaudeville, which would hardly seem to be the right place for him, in a piece by MM. Saintine, Dupeuty and de Villeneuve. Rossini, who made haste slowly, was preparing the "Guillaume Tell" that effaced all the rest, the sublime work that saw the light a year later, on August 3, 1829, toward the end of the Martignac ministry. . . . There was to be one more belated "Guillaume Tell," the posthumous tragedy by Pichet, represented at the Odéon, July 22, 1830, five days after the barricades.

Bent upon fulfilling his agreements with the King, Rossini had ordered a libretto of Étienne de Jouy, author of the French "Moïse,"⁴ and—according to Fétis, whose hint should be remembered—had himself "declared that he yielded only because of the promise he had made, and that this opera should be the last to issue from his pen."⁵ But no one yet knew whether he would keep his word, as the amateurs fondly hoped.⁶ "In this hope there is, perhaps, more of national vanity than of a veritable love of

¹"Revue musicale," August, 1828, pp. 87, 89.

²Music by Carafa, produced at the Opéra-Comique, Dec. 27, 1827, and running until 1831 with 136 performances (105 in 1828).

³In May, 1828, the libretto arranged by Pélissier, and the music by Berton; only 32 performances in two years.

⁴Jal (Fictor) adds, in his "Manuscrit de 1905" (p. 199), that Rossini, "like that Figaro whom he had made so nimble-witted, even after Beaumarchais, *paresseux avec délices* (of a delectable laziness), had hung his lyre, decked with laurel, on the wall of his dining-room, taking it down occasionally at the dessert only to celebrate, after the manner of Horace, the Falerno and the macaroni." But in a note, ostensibly signed by the editor, he goes on to say that "we are told that the author of 'Moïse' is occupied with the 'Vieux de la Montagne,' an opera whose poem is attributed to M. Jouy. Edit."—Is this a mere invention of Jal's, or the echo of a rumor then current? Clément, in his "Dictionnaire des Opéras," mentions a score thus entitled, by Blangini (1781-1841), written for the Opéra, but never produced.

⁵Fétis, "Revue musicale," April, 1828, p. 293, May, p. 400.

⁶*Id.*, *ibid.*, June, 1828, review of *Moïse*, p. 494.

music; for, whatever this extraordinary composer may do, he will conceive nothing more beautiful than 'Moïse,' " Fétis reaffirms. . . . "But, on the other hand, work has ceased to be a pleasure for him; he is fond of repose, and can ill withstand the temptation to utilize, in his new works, some of his less known earlier numbers."¹

So it was generally thought that Rossini was finished, and the appearance of a new opera on which, as Fétis' "Revue" announced in August, 1828, the composer was working in the country, seemed rather doubtful. Did not that same "Revue" declare, six months later, that "Guillaume Tell" would not come out before the autumn, and possibly not until next year, because of Rossini's intended trip to England?

Secluded in the home of his friend, the wealthy banker Aguado Marquis de Las Marismas del Guadalquivir, in the Château d'Evry-Petit-Bourg, Rossini—retouching with Armand Marrast (the house-tutor, and president-to-be of the National Assembly of 1848) the libretto by M. de Jouy, already revised by Hippolyte Bis—was well along in his task by the summer of 1828. He finished it next winter in Paris.² But, before consigning it to the Académie Royale de Musique, Rossini desired to be assured of certain pecuniary advantages in France, as is shown in the archives of the royal household.

Up to then he had fulfilled his agreement with the Opéra. As Composer to the King and Inspector-General of Vocal Instruction in France, he sought, as if foreseeing future events, to make his position more secure. Hence, shortly after the première of "Moïse," he addressed on April 13, 1827, a letter to Vicomte de La Rochefoucauld concerning the definitive form of a contract which he was to enter into with the royal household, a contract assuring him of a life-annuity of 5,000 francs by virtue of a royal decree. "Wholly devoted to my art," he affirms, "and not caring to work in future except in the interest of my reputation, it will, I hope, be quite obvious to you that my sole desire is to remove all doubts regarding the execution of this contract."³

However, the affair was long delayed, and two years passed before the *maestro* obtained satisfaction. We can easily under-

¹*Id.*, *ibid.*, August, 1828, review of *Le Comte Ory*, p. 87.

²According to Doniol, "Histoire du XVI^e Arrondissement" (Paris, 1902, p. 150), "Guillaume Tell" was composed at Passy, where Rossini in 1828 occupied a villa in the Beauséjour Circus. Touching Aguado, cf. especially de Boigne, "Petits Mémoires de l'Opéra" (Paris, 1857, pp. 110 *et seq.*). Aguado was the chief associate of Duponchel, director of the Opéra from 1831.

³Catalogue of the Autograph Collection of Benjamin Fillon (Paris, 1870), No. 2369.

stand that, on the eve of "Guillaume Tell," he lost patience and used the promised and expected opera to coerce the management. On February 27, 1829, he addressed identical letters to the Intendant-General of the royal household, Baron de la Bouillerie, and Vicomte de La Rochefoucauld, Director of Fine Arts, with a draft of a contract which he wished to close prior to his impending departure for Italy. In it he agreed to give five operas in ten years (including "Guillaume Tell") and to come to superintend the rehearsals, for 15,000 francs per annum, besides an annuity of 6,000. On March 24, a new draft was transmitted to the Baron with this marginal note by the Vicomte: "I politely request you to use all possible dispatch in this matter, for the musical score is not easy to conduct." (Rossini had insisted that the annuity should be made "for life.") On the 8th of the following month a pressing letter addressed by the director of the Opéra to the Vicomte informs him that Rossini has decided to break off the rehearsals. The second day after, la Bouillerie reports to La Rochefoucauld that the King had approved the contract on the 4th. On the same day Rossini, writing to La Rochefoucauld, grows urgent, speaks of "much more favorable terms offered him by England, Germany, Italy and Russia," and none the less protests that he will do all in his power "to contribute to the prosperity and glory of this magnificent establishment (the Opéra), unique in Europe." The Vicomte now hastens the solution—"otherwise the damage will be irreparable," he writes to his chief. For Rossini once more insists; he wants his annuity made irrevocable. Finally, on April 29, la Bouillerie informs him that the allocation of 6,000 francs has been granted from that time onward as a pension "exempt from all rebates"; and on May 4 the Vicomte attested the new contract, the last act in these long proceedings.

"Guillaume Tell" was now about to enter upon the active stage of rehearsals, and the pessimistic jottings in the press came to an end. Nothing more was said regarding Rossini's departure for England, or of the necessity for the Opéra to start rehearsing, in October, the coming work by Scribe and Auber ("Le Dieu et la Bayadère"?), as Fétis' "Revue" had hinted in March. Rossini, however, had still another demand to make, namely, his liquidation of the emoluments due him on account of his three preceding works, "the first two having had more than forty performances and the last having reached that stipulated number, . . . before his departure for Italy, which is close at hand." In response to this demand, transmitted by the Opéra, La Rochefoucauld wrote Lubbert to send him (Rossini) "a settlement of his account conformable to that

which you arranged with M. Jouy." This was accordingly effected.¹

* * *

At last, on August 3rd, 1829, in the full tide of summer, "Guillaume Tell" appeared. It was a surprise for the general public, and for the critics the occasion for an explosion of unanimous enthusiasm perhaps without precedent. "Guillaume Tell" caused a momentary reconciliation of the supporters of the French School, the *Italianissimi*, and even the Germanophiles, as they all found in this score the satisfaction of their aspirations. Fétis wrote:

An immense work, a musical colossus. . . . "Guillaume Tell" manifests a new man in the same man, and demonstrates the vanity of any attempt to measure the scope of genius. This production opens a fresh career to Rossini. A man capable of thus modifying himself is able to multiply his prodigies and to furnish for a long time food for the admiration of the true friends of musical art. ("Revue musical," Aug., 1829, Vol. VII, p. 44.)

Nevertheless, the libretto offered a hold for criticism, more especially the rather singular rôle of that Princess Mathilde "who passes her time," as Guy de Charnacé remarks later, "in seeking for the young peasant whom she has chosen for her lover in the mountains."² Fétis praises the score unreservedly, enumerating "all its beauties," with well-deserved commendation of Nourrit, Dabadie, Levasseur, Prévost, Bonnel, and Mmes. Dabadie and Damoreau, creators of the opera; also lauds the scenery by Cicéri, the costumes by Duponchel, and the *mise en scène* by Aumer and Solomé.³

Noted among the rest was Marie Taglioni, "who likewise had a share in the seduction of the audience," says Quicherat (biography of Adolph Nourrit, I, p. 71). He also recalls that some asserted and repeated that "Guillaume Tell" was not a success

¹National archives, "Maison du Roi," 4303, 1684. M. de Curzon, in his biography of Rossini (Paris, 1920, pp. 55 *et seq.*), quotes, at greater length than our space permits, certain items in this suggestive mass of documents. Here we note that the Archives (F 18 669) include a manuscript of the libretto approved by the censors Prévost, Sauvo and Laya on July 10, 1829. It bears no corrections. The same package of documents contains another copy of the first act only, exhibiting numerous variants of the preceding and consisting of only eight scenes instead of ten.

²Guy de Charnacé, "Les Compositeurs français et les Théâtres lyriques," Paris, 1870, p. 21.

³"Revue musicale," *ibid.*, pp. 45-6.

at first—for the purpose of praising Duprez at the expense of Nourrit—continuing:

I recollect perfectly that "Guillaume Tell," from the very first performance, was an exceptional success; its success is attested by the entire press of that day, even by the most sensitive critics, who found that the audience had by no means applauded everything that merited applause. It is true that the audience was then not affected in its admiration by any exterior stimulus. (*Id., ibid.*, p. 72.)

Fétis expresses himself like Vitet in his next-following feuilleton: "Everyone left the theatre feeling that he had witnessed a masterwork, and whenever the name of M. Rossini was mentioned all present joined in a burst of enthusiasm hardly to be described." ("Le Globe," Aug. 5, 1829.)

All were agreed in declaring that this evening opened a new era in the annals of our French opera. For d'Ortigue, whose pamphlet on Rossini contained an appendix on "Guillaume Tell," the coming of this work had "upset our preconceived notions. . . . A music of broad sweep, pure and simple melodies, a liberal yet always wise employment of harmonic effects, all matters to which we have been little accustomed for a long time—this it is withal that has set all Paris agog for a month. . . . Now he (Rossini) is, at last, as I would have him," he adds further on; but, defending Mozart against the enthusiasm of Laphalèque ("Revue de Paris") he judges that "Mozart did well for his period, Rossini has done well for his. . . . After this famous soirée of August 3rd, people said: 'Rossini has outdone Mozart.'—With the reply: 'No more than M. de Jouy has outdone Quinault.'"¹

Played twelve times in thirteen evenings during the month of August, at the Opéra, "Guillaume Tell" (which was soon relieved of twenty minutes of its music) realized the highest box-office receipts in competition with "La Muette di Portici"; with the second performance they rose from 5,200 to over 6,500 francs. The reprise of Oct. 9 realized 6,437 francs; but the nineteenth performance on October 26 brought in only 4,166, and the twenty-fourth, on November 30, fell to 3,418. Cut down to three acts in 1831, the score speedily arrived at piecemeal production, and de Lajarte enumerates one performance of Act I alone, 63 of Act II, 214 of the first three acts, and nine of the first tableau in Act IV. Of 617 performances down to Dec. 31, 1876, there were but 330 in four acts. In 1837, for the sensational début of Duprez, a

¹J. d'Ortigue, "De la Guerre des Dilettantes, ou de la Révolution opérée par M. Rossini dans l'Opéra français, etc." (Paris, Sept., 1829, pp. 64-6-9, 77-9.)

certain quota of suppressed numbers celebrated a revival. 144 performances had then been given. Down to 1893, the year of "Die Walküre" [i.e., of the Parisian première], there were only two years (1849, 1879) when "Guillaume Tell" was missing on the repertory. Revived March 6, 1899, it completed the tale of 800 performances with sixteen, adding twelve in 1900. This year of the Exposition Universelle carried the number to 817 for the century. Before the war 61 performances (the last one bringing out only Act II) made the sum total 878. Since then, Camille Chevillard, an admirer of this score, has conducted it several times. Less favored than "Les Huguenots," which long since overpassed the thousand, "Guillaume Tell" appeared thereafter only on provincial stages.

After "Tell," the last dramatic score of its author, the Opéra borrowed others from Rossini's Italian repertory: "Otello," adapted by Alphonse Royer (the future administrator of the Opéra) and G. Waez, with a ballet by Benoît (Sept. 2, 1844, 27 performances down to 1848, then certain fragments in 1850, '58, '61); the same librettists, with the collaboration of Niedermeyer, then concocted a pastiche of "La Donna del Lago," renaming it "Robert Bruce," whose première is famed in the annals of the Opéra because of the Stolz incident. "The audience, for all the trumpets and the Sax fanfare, did not receive this pastiche well," says de Lajarte, "and nevertheless, despite all this noise, "Robert Bruce" attained thirty-one performances."¹ Finally "Semiramis," translated by Méry, a late convert to the Rossini cult, had a "relative unsuccess" with twenty-one performances. The première took place on July 9, 1860, nine months before "Tannhäuser."

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Rossini had dedicated his score of "Guillaume Tell" to the King, and His Majesty, by rescript of August 7, named him a Chevalier of the Legion of Honor, by request of the Vicomte de La Rochefoucauld. The rumor of this appointment spread quickly through musical circles, even before "Le Moniteur" mentioned it, and the same evening, after the third presentation of "Guillaume Tell," a serenade was given the *maestro* beneath his windows on the Boulevard Montmartre by the artists of the Académie Royale de Musique. On the 15th Rossini left Paris for Boulogne, taking

¹Th. de Lajarte, "Bibliothèque musicale de l'Opéra," II, p. 184.

with him (so it was said) a libretto by M. Scribe.¹ On his return in November, 1830, he found a new and very economically inclined government installed in France, which threatened to withhold his pension. The ensuing lawsuit was decided after five years in his favor, his agreement bearing the signature of King Charles X himself. He sought, furthermore, to fulfill his engagements; thus we find him writing to the ministry (in February, 1831, apropos of a "Faust" for which Jouy [or Scribe?] had furnished the libretto) to ask leave for a month, and to remind them that he had in vain awaited a poem while he was in Italy. He had returned to Paris (so he continues) hoping that his presence would be a reminder of their contractual obligations toward him; however, no communication had been sent him. He hopes that, during his absence, new decisions will be arrived at concerning himself, so that on his return he will be enabled to fulfill the clauses of his agreement.—When this letter was laid before him, the then minister, M. de Montalivet, contented himself with writing—and not even finishing his sentence: "Without doubt I shall look into. . . ."²

With 1830 Rossini's first Parisian period comes to an end. The *maestro*, having accomplished his life-work with "Guillaume Tell," which some looked upon simply as the beginning of a new series, now became, while very much alive, a legendary figure. Thenceforward he was of only fortuitous interest to musicians.

Gifted with a "facility" on which perhaps too much stress has been laid, Rossini, who had studied French taste, knew what he had to do to win immediate success in Paris. He had accomplished that fusion of "two broad currents of divergent proclivities and attractions," the Italian and the German, whereof Stendhal in 1824 hopefully anticipated the "ever-memorable reunion in this Paris which, despite censors and constraints, is more than ever the capital of Europe."—"I wanted to show the French that I had some small knowledge of music," Rossini remarked to the biographer Hoefer apropos of his "Guillaume Tell," the opera

¹A letter from Rossini of May 4, 1830 (cited without date by A. Soubies in "Le Théâtre-Italien," p. 54), indicates quite the opposite: "I have not yet received my libretto, which I have awaited for the last nine months since leaving Paris," he writes La Rochefoucauld. "I had desired above all to profit by these fine spring days and my sojourn in the country, where I have been settled for some time, in order to press work on my opera; for by dint of industry and zeal I wished to give you a proof of my desire to please you."

²Thus "l'Intermédiaire des Chercheurs," May 25, 1874, col. 279-80. After returning to Paris in November, 1831, Rossini set out on a trip to the Pyrenees, accompanied by Aguado, with whom he went to Spain the year following. In 1836, having left France—as he thought—definitively, he went back to Italy after an excursion, with Rothschild, to the valley of the Rhine.

which it had taken him longest to compose.¹ But it may well be that he felt that his vein might soon be exhausted, were he to continue working for the Opéra. As for writing for his compatriots, that was far from his thoughts. Meyerbeer, whose "*Il Crociato*" he had recently introduced to the Parisians, threatened to become a redoubtable competitor; this he perceived when "*Robert le Diable*"² came out (Nov. 21, 1831). And so, not caring to contest the field with him, he withdrew from Paris after the première of "*Les Huguenots*," with no intention of returning. The "*Jewish Sabbath*";³ a considerable personal fortune which Rothschild, Aguado and Pillet-Will did their best to increase;⁴ his indolence, no less legendary than his "facility," and perhaps more apparent than real, or simply fatigue and a longing for rest; his "*Guillaume Tell*," maltreated and amputated at the Opéra; his far from cordial relations with the government of Louis-Philippe,⁵ which necessitated his pleading for five years in order to save his retiring pension: abundant reasons, these, for disposing this "casualty of 1830," as Quicherat called him, to take the rest which, all in all, he well had earned.

But could he foresee, on leaving Paris with Baron de Rothschild in the spring of 1836, that the same city, twenty years later, would take him to her arms and hold him until his dying day, then to honor him with a grandiose funeral pageant?

(Translated by Theodore Baker.)

¹Hoefer, "*Biographie Didot*," XLII (1863), p. 674.

²"*Robert le Diable*," an opera that silenced Rossini and reduced him to writing nothing more than romances for the churches. . . ." (Jules Janin, "*Un Hiver à Paris*," 1843, "*Le Théâtre*," p. 161.) The première of *Les Huguenots* took place on February 29, 1836. The same day Rossini, born February 29, 1792, finished his forty-fourth year.

³We recall Rossini's witticism, which is apparently well authenticated (it was reported by Baron Ernouf and Richard Wagner): "I shall come back when the Jews have finished their Sabbath."

⁴"Three friends, Baron James de Rothschild, M. Aguado, Marquis de las Marismas, and Comte Pillet-Will, waged bitter war against one another to the sole end of enriching Rossini. To each of these financiers the composer remitted a portion of his moderate emoluments, and when M. de Rothschild learned that M. Aguado had within three months doubled the sum confided to him by Rossini, he racked his brains to perform the same feat in six weeks, which probably did not present much difficulty to him. Comte Pillet-Will proceeded similarly, so it is not surprising that Rossini's savings were multiplied." (Maurice Strakosch, "*Souvenirs d'un Impresario*," Paris, 1887, p. 66.) The same author narrates that, after "*Guillaume Tell*," the director of the Opéra said to Rossini: "Monsieur Rossini, how could you, how did you dare write for the Grand Opera of Paris such an insipid, incoherent work as '*Guillaume Tell*'? This work is so mediocre that only one thing remains for you to do: to forfeit the contract that I was so asinine as to sign with you, and to forego the composition of '*Jeanne d'Arc*' and '*Mahomet*.'"—"No trouble about that," Rossini replied: "I forfeit it here and now, and will add, that I'll compose no more operas as long as I live." (*Ibid.*, p. 68.) This is most likely one of the thousand-and-one stories told of Rossini for the last hundred years.

⁵"Rossini," says Baron d'Ernouf, "acted as if the July Revolution had been aimed at himself." ("*Compositeurs célèbres*," Paris, 1868, p. 135.)

IN DEFENSE OF CANNED MUSIC

By GARRY JOEL AUGUST

SCATTERED throughout this vast country are some thousands of devotees to a strange cult, which for all the stubborn sincerity of its faithful, has yet to be recognized by the intelligent public at large. As a matter of fact, that public is for the most part hardly aware of its existence. Or if it thinks at all of this quaint band of worshippers, it is with a certain lordly superiority and even downright contempt. Thus far, at least, the course of the phonograph addict has had to cut through the bland amused tolerance of his fellows. His obsession ranks him in their eyes with stamp-collectors, bibliophiles and numismatists, perhaps a trifle below. And the thing he loves with fanatic ardor they dismiss with cruel indifference as "canned" music.

That whips him to rage. He knows that in all other respects he may be a perfectly normal individual, a good citizen and pater-familias, a man of breeding and taste. He suffers untold agonies because, confessing to this uncommon affliction, he is placed at once beyond the pale of cultured intercourse. To admit a more than bowing acquaintance with "Beowulf" and Chaucer or the mysteries of Greek syntax is still to keep a dignified place among the respectables. And even the uninitiate have inherited sufficient reverence for learning to see something meritorious in his ability to read, let us say, the "Song of Roland" or the "Nibelungen" in the original. But the sympathy stops short of the music box. To boast of devotion to that inanimate purveyor of second-hand harmony is to align himself forthwith with the naïve, the amateurish—the cranks.

Manifestly the burden of proof lies on his shoulders. For, in the minds of both music-lovers and the congenitally unæsthetic, the bare mention of the phonograph still calls forth notions of the ludicrous and futile. It conjures up images of jazz conductors whose hands are not their most expressive means of communicating their musical interpretations, or chanters of those dreadful blues; whereas even the more charitable think of creaking, grunting, scratching accompaniments to muffled renditions of "The Blue Danube" and the "Tannhäuser" overture. Besides, there is something absurd in an apparently healthy and sagacious fellow's

becoming the slave of a machine and learning his music by way of a steel contraption and a lot of black waxen platters.

He is puzzled for a retort. He looks at his cabinets lined ceiling-high with many hundreds of musical classics, ancient and modern, and knows that for himself and thousands of his fellow-smitten they have been the chief, if not altogether the sole, source for whatever knowledge of the art they possess. He remembers, too, that concert and opera patrons have looked at his collection in blank indifference, and he has caught now and then a faint suspicion of a smile as he belabored them with the glories of his favorite hobby. He has been visited by men and women proclaiming loudly their love for good music, and noticed how almost invariably after the first few minutes of Franck's *D Minor* they'd pick up a magazine or begin chatting of things remote from the music at hand. And he recalls how often he has slammed shut the symphony album and haled forth the "*Arlésienne*" suite—they found that so much more to their liking!

Then in the public prints he has observed a total unawareness of the wonders his phonograph has brought to him. Until very recently, in fact, the musical magazines ignored the matter of records completely, though one or two did condescend to print announcements of disks about to appear. But the general tenor of whatever mention the instrument received was a bit contemptuous, the expert musician feeling that to acknowledge the phonograph as a factor in his world was somehow beneath him. It may be quite useful in training school-children to recognize the leading themes of "*The New World*" and the "*Peer Gynt*" suite; nor does it hurt the average householder to have a few Caruso and McCormack records around the place; but what has all that to do with music at its loftiest? As it is performed in actual concert by Elman or Stokowski? He couldn't help noticing that a few resolute artists had even refused to give their genius to the disks, and that the better-grade critics rarely deprived themselves the luxury of that withering flourish, "canned" music.

As for the average music-lover, he has learned to take him with more than a grain of salt. He has watched him during performances, listened to his comments, sounded his proficiencies. His sneer at the record cult is not so difficult to interpret. Plainly speaking, music has become a noisy pose in our civilization, exactly of a piece with the prevailing fashion in the literary world. It is quite the thing now to be able to spout of conductors, soloists and compositions, just as it is incumbent now upon the good ladies to air their views on the latest novel over the bridge table.

The mere fact that music is even more intangible than fiction or biography makes it easier to maintain the æsthetic pose. And yet a little experience in the ways of human vanity is enough to convince the more skeptical of the sheer hollowness of such pretense.

The very people who flock to the concert halls will spend whole evenings wriggling to jazz or with ears glued to the radio taking in the ether cacophonies. Or their phonographs, he will discover, are liberally supplied with all the recent masterpieces of crooning, theme-song and fox-trot. And though they buy up proudly whole boxes for the season of opera and symphony, he finds them curiously unresponsive to the news that with an outlay approximating the cost of a good automobile they can make themselves masters of the finest music at all times, interpreted, moreover by the leading artists, and in the privacy of their own homes. No whispering in the row behind them, no crackle of programs, no scraping of feet, no need to murder an entire evening for the sake of listening to a desired symphony or concerto. Whatever the more squeamish musician may allege against the records, the fact that the common run of musical audiences sniffs at the rich possibilities of the phonograph is glaring evidence that behind all the eye-rolling is nothing but idle sham. Hence your crank is at no pains to refute the worthy who waxes facetious over his "canned" music, seeing that it is of no importance to convince anyone who can't distinguish between the C Minors of Beethoven and Brahms.

As for the true musical connoisseurs, however, there was ample excuse in the past for their coldness towards mechanical versions of their beloved art. For the phonograph and its repertoire of ten years ago had shockingly little to offer them: operatic arias trolled by the great; a few violin solos aimed at the average buyer and fiddled by Maud Powell, Ysaye and Kreisler; piano tid-bits which sounded as though they were being performed on tin cans and beer bottles, though Paderewski and De Pachmann, as the red labels made oath, were actually playing them; a handful of overtures, abbreviated symphonies, snatches from oratorio, chamber music and Wagnerian opera. Surely nothing to stir your jaded metropolitan, who could hear Brahms and César Franck thirty times yearly and who had every celebrated performer at his regal command. Why fool around with a "Magic Flute" overture that came muffled and ghastly out of a paltry box when you could be sure to hear Mengelberg or Toscanini play it for you as it should be played?

But what about the thousands buried in the provinces, even Chicago, St. Louis or Detroit? How often in a whole lifetime could they hear Mozart's G Minor, E Flat Major, the "Jupiter," of course, Beethoven's Eroica and Ninth, the preludes to "Die Meistersinger" or "Tristan and Isolde," the First of Brahms, Strauss's "Don Juan" and "Till Eulenspiegel"? How become acquainted with so much as the minutest fraction of that whole literature of the string trio and quartet, piano and violin concerto, the sonata and instrumental quintet? Suppose that under the old system of recording, the bass simply wouldn't come through—was that any reason for going through this vale of tears without knowing the "Emperor," the Sixth, the "Forellen" quintet, Schumann's Fourth, even the "Military" symphony? Granted that visiting orchestras occasionally refrained from their maddening habit of playing the "New World" and Tchaikowsky's Sixth year after year, and a man got to hear the Master's Seventh once or twice. How would that fix it in his soul, so that he came to know its pattern and could whistle every theme and whole stretches of that glorious passage-work? Certainly he could never hope to hear the rare instrumental combinations Mozart loved to toy with—those gems for winds and strings—or the Schubert quintet in C Major, his octet in F, or the string sextets of Johannes Brahms? What profit in having the Flonzaleys come to his neighborhood and tantalize him with Mozart's C Major and the ineffable C Sharp Minor of Lord Ludwig, when the odds were a thousand to one he'd never hear them again in this mortal life?

The professional musician may be given the right to laugh, if he choose, at this wholly unpedagogical device for plumbing the depths of his art; but then, he lives in that world every moment of the day. But it's a trifle hard on men who, when our American companies insisted on turning out every month a new version of "Humoresque" or "Ave Maria" or "Molly on the Shore," went deep into their jeans for European editions of the Pastoral, the Eroica, the Fourth and Ninth, not to speak of Brahms's First and Second. Nor is it charitable to thousands of "nuts" who via the phonograph have been able to memorize whole concertos and symphonies by the score, who know the entrance for strings, oboe and horn to every one of the Nine, and who'd be willing to obey the Volstead act for a whole year if they could only lay hands on the still unborn Schumann concerto for violoncello.

The fanatic lives a life that sets him distinctly apart from all other men. To learn of the shifts he will go to in order to acquire

a symphony on which he has set his heart is almost to come to believe in the rebirth of ancient heroism. The hairy shirt, hunger, flagellation, he laughs to scorn. He can remember when the purchase of a tinny record of the slow movement from Beethoven's Fourth meant walking to work every morning that he might save up enough nickels—and the thing was played by a brass band at that! And how he used to gather up catalogues of all the companies, and devour them with his meals, and memorize the golden marvels they heralded to his inflamed envy. And many a one can tell you of hungry dreams in which figured endless lists of Titta Ruffo, Amato, Journet, Kreisler, Bonci, and Pol Plançon. And how in the old days he used feverishly to scan every announcement hoping for a bit of Bach or something from the "Messiah." His outward seeming may be that of a perfectly rational citizen, a booster or solid professional man, but in his brain dance visions of glutted shelves, gleaming black disks, huge shipments of new albums from France and England. He needs neither opium nor the poet's soul to fill his waking hours with fantasy and passion.

Until the radio came to terrify record manufacturers, actual phonographic treasures were disconcertingly rare. American companies might issue stray movements from Tschaiowsky's Fifth or a scrap of chamber music, but their sales never warranted the companies' venture into more ambitious projects. Their heavy profits lay in popular song and jazz. So for the gramophile, as he is now labelled, the pickings were niggardly indeed. In all those years he may have moved the natural course from standard song, operatic aria and the lighter program stuff to Wagnerian drama, the tone poem and chamber music; but in their later development his tastes could not begin to be appeased. Over in Europe, where people were taking the phonograph more seriously, they were producing a gratifying number of master-works; yet only a few trickled over here—the cost was prohibitive. Some five years ago, however, one gramophone company came out with an announcement which marked for the devotee a complete step forward in the history of civilization, to wit, the issue of the world's great music completely recorded and arranged in separate albums. A rival company soon commenced its own series, and the faithful who had waited hopeless years for just these things broke out in loud hosannahs.

Radio's coming threatened at first to stifle this musical renaissance; for records, as is commonly known, were being made by a process which involved the loss of color and volume when the voice or tone passed from artist to finished disk. No

phonograph then on the market could play records in a manner satisfactorily to compete with the new realistic menace of the wireless. At best the disks sounded pale, mechanical, lifeless. All sorts of awkward devices had to be employed in recording orchestral music, for example; instruments were substituted for those indicated by the score, others left out completely; while the bass strings failed miserably to obtain a hearing. And though leading symphonic bands were engaged, with a Toscanini, a Mengelberg or Stokowski at the desk, records could not be made to capture the sonority and depth one looked for in the concert halls. The outlook was bleak enough. Business fell off, stocks tumbled, and the companies seemed headed for the rocks.

Then someone discovered how to employ radio microphones in the manufacture of records and the present phonograph age was ushered in. They tinkered with cabinets, horns, reproducers, and the disks themselves, until within barely more than a year the radio was beaten at its own game. The phonograph could stand on its own legs now. It was a thing complete and without apology. The companies began once more to flourish; and now after some three years of fatness this new electric process has already lavished on the individual fanatic more than he can conveniently digest.

He beholds himself literally flooded with good things beyond the wildest dreams of a half-decade ago. Thus, in a single month he may file into his shelves a staggering number of fresh recruits: a Haydn symphony, hitherto unknown to him, the 13th, played by the Vienna Philharmonic; the noble Suite in D, of Bach, translated to the black disks in superlative fashion by Defauw and the Brussels Royal Conservatory orchestra; a perfect deluge of Brahms: the lovely trio in C Minor for piano and strings, the familiar violin sonata in D Minor with Zimbalist, the tuneful quartet, Op. 67, which the Leners throw off with unbuttoned gusto, and the tremendous Second Piano Concerto in which Arthur Rubinstein sets a lusty pace for the baton of Albert Coates. And in this age of dazzling luminaries, what can be more thrilling than to come upon the newly arrived album of the same master's Double Concerto, performed at Barcelona, where, look you, Jacques Thibaud and Pablo Casals do the honors while Alfred Cortot is lashing the great 'cellist's own orchestra with many a triumphal flourish?

He may be delirious with joy by the time these wonders have unfolded, but there are others still in the magical box: the Violin Concerto of Tchaikowsky played by Mischa Elman; the Franck

Sonata wherein the delicious coupling of Thibaud's fiddle and Cortot's piano bring the heavens closer; the quiet dignity of Albert Sammons moves through the splendor of Elgar's Violin Concerto; Koussevitzky and the Bostonians do the Classical Symphony of Prokofieff and the sensational "Bolero" that has at length brought popular acclaim to Maurice Ravel. For the lighter evenings there are "La Tosca", recorded at La Scala in fourteen records, and the most delightful Spanish opera, "Marina," a real find, in twelve, with renowned artists like Mardones and Lazaro flinging off graceful melodies.

Glorious finds these would have been in the old parched days when a mere snatch of Haydn's "Lark" quartet meant hours of unclouded joy. To-day, though he may listen to the music of these records for the first time in his life, something of the fine edge of those pioneer days is departed. The boon of sudden surprise is lost, and the new batches are no longer triumphs—hardly more than purchases. For with all their marvels still to be fathomed, they are only fillers-in, at best, on shelves already creaking under their burden of endless Schubert and Beethoven, Mozart and Brahms.

Nor must he overlook what progress the art of recording has made in so vast a span as four long years. Therefore he weeds his shelves of older electrical albums—what a vast difference just a couple of years make!—and refurnishes them with the newer performances of Beethoven's symphonies and concertos, a fresher version of the "Missa Solemnis" and the earlier tone poems of Richard Strauss, especially since the latter have been recently directed by the composer himself. So the month's shipment means oblivion in the attic for many a precious album that only a few years ago had seemed to him the last word in sonorous realism and technical authority.

The phonograph zealot alone can appreciate how romantic this business has become. Where in past years he held himself lucky because some German concern issued Wagner's "Faust" music, to-day he stands baffled before reasonably complete sets of the entire "Nibelungen" series, "Tristan and Isolde" and the "Meistersinger." Without having to dread chatter and silly comment or the inclemencies of weather and travel, he can sit through the whole of the "Missa Solemnis" and the "Choral" symphony in the privacy of his own living room. He won't be bothered by tenors with colds nor be forced to look for an hour at fat contraltos going through their facial contortions. Nor, if he wants to hear Rachmaninoff's Second, will he be compelled to sit

through a Rossini overture, some recent agony of the new French school, or whole gobs of so-called American music. He probably goes to concerts to hear how Stock and Gabrilowitsch play the things he knows; the Brahms Second for instance, seeing what a dull affair Walter Damrosch made of it for the records. He will likely miss a few interesting novelties, but rather cynically he leaves them to aesthetes, jaded professional musicians and polysyllabic newspaper reviewers. He knows, moreover, that even so lucid a gem as Beethoven's Eighth has unplumbed marvels to reveal at the twentieth proving—why bother, then, with something he may never hear again? He remembers how many times he had to play Franck's Quartet before it yielded up its subtle magic, and is a trifle dubious about the worthy who gushes dramatically on first hearing the "Variations Symphoniques."

Afraid he might be doing injustice to the claims of newer musical cults, and keeping before him the painful discomfiture which overtook orthodox enemies of Beethoven, Wagner and Richard Strauss, he tries hard to be fair-minded. So he buys the moderns, too; seeing that so many respectable critics whose judgment and equipment he has learned to admire are applauding them *fortissimo*. He plays them, he feels, with mind free, happy to know that there are so many strange pastures where he may gambol and feed. The neighbors hear weird sounds coming out of his open windows, and resolve fiercely to tell the janitor about it the next day. The man upstairs is really trying to discover what the critics rave about in Holst's "Planets," Respighi's "Fountains of Rome" and Ravel's "Mother Goose." So, for a while, his machine grinds them out religiously. Then gradually he notices how they remain on his shelves for longer intervals, though he may find them on first auditions most clever and charming. Stravinsky's "Petrouchka" and "Fire-Bird," Dukas, Elgar, even Debussy's famous quartet, somehow begin to lose their earlier power over him. They become too thin and transparent, the ring of authority is no longer in them, and they lie neglected for months at a time. When he does brush them off he is careful not to play the Eroica either before or after. The "Clock" symphony can weather that ordeal cheerfully enough, so can even the "Rosamunde" overture; but these others grow woefully pale. He consoles himself that perhaps this industrial and scientific age wasn't made for harmony of the first order. Perhaps that calls for a naïve hopefulness, a depth of sentiment, the spacious splendor of titanic souls in revolt, of which our own times are sadly incapable.

And if he is challenged by a misgiving that this is only a rationalizing of his own æsthetic astigmatism, he finds comfort in the reflection that life is brief, anyhow. Since music is not his sole vocation, let other men fret about the moderns. Granted a few masterpieces slip by him—what then? There are vast stretches of the established masters still to be tapped, thousands of discs still to be made of melodies which would have been forever silent to him but for the coming of Edison and Berliner. Recalling what profound gratitude he experienced on first walking home with the "Coriolanus" overture under his arm, he remains contented, let the modern insurgents sneer if they will.

One difficulty must somehow be surmounted before every true worshiper of Euterpe can be converted to the phonograph. Mechanically there is little for the most critical to carp at. What one hears on the modern instruments is actually the performance of the artists themselves; the verve of Stokowski, the burly gusto of Mengelberg, the refined sincerity of Stock, Cortot's romanticism, the sparkle and precision of the Flonzaleys, the pure wizardry of those matchless Leners, the exquisite subtlety of a Thibaud. The technique of producing the disk has become an art in itself, and the faithful look for sonority and balance as sharply as in any performance in the flesh. Your true gramophile is merciless these days; the slightest flaw is bruited about his world with unsparing relentlessness. So when anyone tells him that records cannot give back the true essence of actual performance, he simply replies that said complainant is talking nonsense. What disturbs him, in good sooth, is the more sordid problem of economy. The cost of a record library is staggering, and since the fanatic is so constituted that he cannot rest until he owns the opuses he wants, he is beset night and day by longings such as only the healthiest purse may satisfy.

Thus, to be concrete, the list submitted above as a specimen monthly purchase will set him back to the tune of eighty-five dollars and more. And hardly a month goes by but that dealers and importers extract from him sums perilously near this figure. A book may be borrowed from friends or libraries, sometimes rented in the stores. But an album of the Bayreuth Wagnerian recordings he must own, else his life is a thing of emptiness and frustration. His fellow crank may love him as a brother, but he'll never loan him those records. For the owner has his own way of playing and handling them, his favorite brand of needle or reproducer to use on them. Trusting them out of his sight he will not hear of—he knows how he had to swink and hoard to make up

their formidable cost. So when the companies announce a violin concerto or a Schubert symphony, he must be prepared to let go of at least five dollars, oftener more, sometimes as many as eighteen. If he's a Wagner enthusiast and can't wait until the American companies bring out the "Götterdämmerung"—he fears that they may not—then the only way to peace for him is to lay out exactly forty heavy dollars of the realm. For the great majority of the tribe it means, therefore, the old tragic conflict between champagne tastes and beer money.

The philistine world is sadly unaware of the terrific grip this madness takes on its victims. Once a man becomes bitten with the frenzy, there is no cure for it but in more and better records. Meeting one of his fellows—for their number is not yet legion—is for him a red-letter experience to be treasured. Then the talk runs to heated argument anent the merits or failings of the new Pastoral symphony, loud boasting of owning a Brahms quartet that the other has strangely overlooked, exchange of rumors concerning certain works already recorded at Camden or London and not yet published to the world, serious gossip of the studios, and mutual advice how best to catalogue the mounting pile of disks now littering parlor, bedroom and bath.

There is even a medium of expression for the afflicted: a magazine published at Boston under the maidenly title, "Music Lovers' Phonograph Monthly Review." To the unbeliever it is one of the curiosities of modern journalism, gotten up by a group of men, who often write amateurishly, to be sure, but who atone for it, nevertheless, by remarkable zeal and passion. By their own confession they devote eight or nine hours daily to the hearing of new products from the mills, and one of them has even boasted of replaying Mengelberg's version of the Tschaikowsky Fifth no less than thirty times in one week. Greater love hath no man. Their literary endeavors are too often sophomoric, but when they tackle the records themselves, the resulting criticism is unfailingly fair and reliable. The subscriber soon learns that when they cry up a record it is worth buying; when they say thumbs down, he'd best wait until some other company turns it out. They know music too, these apostles, and they love it with infinite devotion. On the strength of their pioneering many an album has been issued by concerns that could logically expect no profit from the venture. Their ferret eyes leave nothing undetected: what unrecorded sonatas are about to be fixed on the disks, or how soon one may look for the Brandenburg concertos to be issued in America. Upon how wide a field they may exercise their hungry talents one can

surmise from a recent statement that in their studios are now filed some 28,000 records of the better-grade music.

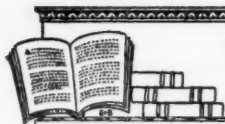
In this country, notwithstanding our pretensions to culture and the somewhat mildly ludicrous attempts to create Ernest Newmans out of future movie patrons and jazz hounds, the gramophile is still lonesome enough to feel self-conscious and even a trifle absurd. In England and on the Continent, where the cult of the disk has won to comparative dignity, the phonograph is regarded as serious business, and its devotee harbors none of the misgivings that still beset the American native. He need not encounter the smirks of low-brows or the superior scorn of intelligentsia. To him the art of making records is fully as noble, as humanly essential, as the printing of books. Over here one must explain and apologize, for the term "canned" music is still abroad in the land.

Yet nothing can be more silly to the man with a taste and the necessary means and leisure to indulge it. He can have the world's delights as the whim of the moment dictates—and by a mere glance at his shelves. While at unbuttoned ease he smokes a fat after-breakfast cigar, there are Bach and Haydn and Schubert to glorify the clear morning, or a Mozart quartet, essence of youth, vigor and good cheer. Close by his shoulder stands a rack of miniature scores, and one of these he may con as the disks spin out their melodies for him. Nothing breaks the link between himself and the music, no scraping or creaking, no sight of perspiring flautist or gawky bull-fiddler. It is music undefiled; even the needle-rasp, bugaboo of older days, having gone the way of rumbling motors and wobbly, grating records. It is the true fashion in which melody should be enjoyed, informally, carelessly, with at most a friend or two by one's side.

Then with the day's stint behind him, he may lounge at dusk with Schumann, Chopin—the golden hour for that lady-like fellow—Brahms, César Franck, even Debussy. And if he knows his evening free, then he plans for more elaborate business. A telephone call to a few intimates, a little drink, perhaps, for the unloosing of good comradeship, the scores are handed around, the program settled in advance or left to vagrant fancy—and away through the giant landmarks of the musical empire. If unlooked-for guests pop in to break up the revels, there is always a shelf waiting for them, too: even the "Midsummer Night's Dream," "Nutcracker" suite, "Scheherazade," the "New World," "Capriccio Espagnol," "Hungarian Fantasy," "Rienzi" overture, "The Mikado" and Tschaikowsky's "Pathétique," are better than a

whole night given over to feeble small talk. Upon this last stock he draws whenever suspected poseurs ask to hear something. They're human beings, after all; why should they be tortured with "The Afternoon of a Faun"?

But it's when he reaches home late at night from dusty and irritating contacts that he tastes to the depths the boon of his despised instrument. For in those quiet hours he will hear melodies the like of which was never heard on land or sea, and perhaps never will be heard—the collected quartets of Ludwig van Beethoven, sceptred emperor of Cecilia's realm. Puffing at his last pipeful he vouchsafes himself a lordly smile at all human frailty and cant, at all uncandors and vanities. Sitting by his side the master of Bonn would chuckle too, while there in the corner before him the Capets or Leners are discoursing the loveliest utterance of his life—the peerless, the unapproachable Op. 131 in C Sharp Minor.



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